



Gudam gone historic

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Take in the island life

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Hellenic heroes restored

The treasures of the Greek Acropolis have been sealed off from civilization. The new Acropolis Museum offers new floor space for treasures of the ages, with room to spare for artifacts still lost to Britain.

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Chinese soldier's Baghdad blog

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Children key to preserving Peking Opera

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Montessori markets to minors

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Directors capture Beijing's spirit

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Official denies manipulating city's air quality monitor

The government did not move air quality monitoring stations in order to report better statistics during its preparation for the Olympic Games, an environment official said Wednesday.

Answering a question whether it shifted some monitoring stations from heavy-traffic areas to less polluted places, Du Shaozhong, deputy director of the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau said all the locations of the monitoring stations can be found on the Bureau's official Web site.

"We did everything in accordance to relative national regulations, monitoring four types of major pollutants. We opened all the monitoring statistics to the general public on our Web site

where you can find station locations and statistics," Du said.

"So there is no truth to the charge that we crossed out some stations in heavy-traffic areas," he said.

"We are developing our monitoring system step by step with more stations being set up," he said.

Between 1998 and 2007, the amount of sulphur dioxide in the capital's air fell 60.8 percent, while carbon monoxide was cut 39.4 percent. Nitrogen dioxide was reduced 10.8 percent and particles were down 17.8 percent, Du said.

Apart from the particles, he said the other indicators met national standards. He added Beijing would implement more stringent environmental standards to reduce pollutants in

the coming months ahead of the August Olympics.

Du stressed the improving air quality required long-lasting and consistent efforts. "We have fought for the goal (of better air quality) for almost 10 years, and will continue our efforts on this path."

He outlined a new set of measures this year to contain air pollution. This included removing 2,300 cars, 1,500 buses and 2,000 cabs that failed to meet emission standards.

The bureau will continue to target industrial emissions by polluting businesses such as chemical, metallurgy and cement manufacturers, and require residents to contribute to emission-cutting by switching from coal to electricity.

New goals include cutting pol-

lutants by another 50,000 tons this year, Du said.

As the host of the summer Olympics, the city has been using its resources to tackle air pollution, cited by many as a concern for the Games. In the past two years, the city has expanded public transport, tested a temporary traffic ban and relocated polluting factories.

"Under normal meteorological conditions, air quality during the Olympics will meet the national and World Health Organization (WHO) standards," Du said. "We will fulfill the environmental commitment we made when bidding for the Games," he said, stressing that "there is not much room for doubt."

(Xinhua)

New individual tax law raises threshold

By Zhang Dongya

The individual income tax levy threshold has been raised from 1,600 yuan a month to 2,000 yuan, according to a newly-amended Individual Income Tax Law issued by the State Council. The tax law will take effect tomorrow.

The income tax threshold for contracted or leased workers will be raised to 2,000 yuan a month, according to the regulations.

Other forms of profit will be clarified except cash, physical objects and negotiable securities included in the taxable income derived by individuals.

Individual tax payers who live overseas but earn money in China, or who have housing in China but earn money abroad, will continue to have a tax threshold of 4,800 yuan. Their monthly income deduction will be raised to 2,000 yuan from 1,600, but with additional deductions will fall from 3,200 to 2,800 per month.

The new regulations may help to relieve the tax burden low-income workers bear and to combat inflation, Wang Kangmao, a professor from East China University of Politics and Law, said.

Data from State Statistics Bureau shows 70 percent of income earners will be exempted from income tax this year, and the national finance incomes will reduce by 30 billion. In Beijing, 600,000 citizens will not need to pay taxes, a spokesman for the Beijing Local Tax Bureau said.

Tax on income derived from stock gains is not covered by the new law and remains tax free.

This is the second time the income tax threshold was adjusted.

In 2006, the threshold was adjusted to 1,600 yuan. The Individual Income Tax System was established in 1980, with its income tax cutoff point set at 800 yuan.

Security guard conduct to be regulated

By Zhang Dongya

A new draft law which will regulate the behavior of China's security guards had been prepared by the State Council to gather public opinion.

According to the Administrative Regulations on Security Guard Service, security guards will be forbidden to restrict the personal freedom of another person, insult them, illegally perform a body search, assault them or instigate someone else to commit assault. Additionally, they may not confiscate another person's property or documents or interfere with official performance. It bans guards from using violence to take money, infringe on privacy or gather information.

The draft also placed strict requirements on future guards. Persons younger than 18 years old, who do not have a middle school diploma or who have a criminal record cannot be employed as security guards.

Candidates must pass an examination to get a Professional Qualification Certificate of Security Guard, issued by the police station, before starting work.

Security guard activities will be supervised by the police department, the draft said. Security guard service companies used to be managed by the police department, according to old regulations passed in 2000.

The Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council will accept public opinion about the new draft on its Web site until March 3.

Recent statistics show there are 2,500 security guard agencies in the country, and as many as 3 million people are employed as security guards.

Frequent cases in which security guards made body searches or invaded the rights of residents have been reported. The new draft will empower the public to protect themselves against the behavior of unruly guards.

Terminal to locate lost cars



The Terminal Building 3 (T3) at Capital International Airport will enter use today. It will receive its first airplane and group of passengers. The terminal provides free lost car location service.

Photo by Lucky Jia

Dirty construction sites may be stalled this summer

By Huang Daoheng

"Dirty" construction sites may be closed down during the upcoming Olympic Games to ensure a clean environment, a senior construction official said Tuesday.

Lai Ming, director of the science and technology division under the construction ministry, said the shut down may be a course the municipal government pursues during the Olympics.

"Many host countries took special steps to control their transportation and construction industries and ensure a clean environment," Lai said.

Ministry figures showed that the construction areas involved in China's green construction system

had increased by 2 billion square meters each year, nearly half of the world's total. As of October, 97 percent of new construction designs in China meet the energy-efficiency standards adopted in July 2006, but only 71 percent of those under construction did so.

The ministry will punish developers and designers who are found delinquent on the new energy conservation rules, Qiu Baoxing, vice-minister of construction, said.

Exposing the names of violators to the public may be one measure, Qiu said. "Transparency will harm their business opportunities and let their clients in on their bad conduct," he said.

Qiu said a Construction Energy Efficiency Rule adopted by the State Council recently will soon be implemented nationwide.

The vice-minister did not reveal details of the rule, but earlier reports said it offers tax incentives to developers and property owners who follow energy efficiency rules.

China's green construction system, with a market value estimated at 1.5 trillion yuan, is growing through energy-efficient projects, according to the ministry.

The central government appropriated 900 million yuan last year to upgrade household heating meters.

Brief news

New canal ensures water

Construction is completed on a water diversion canal that will provide emergency supplies to Beijing. The newly-built 210-kilometer canal stretches from Shijiazhuang city, Hebei Province to the capital and will begin operations by April. It will divert up to 300 million cubic meters of water each year.

Next bullet train researched

Research has begun on the 350-kilometer-per-hour Beijing-Shanghai high-speed railway that has been under discussion for years, according to an agreement signed by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Railways Tuesday.

Cultural sites get a face lift

The municipal government plans to invest 120 million yuan (US \$16 million) to restore cultural sites this year to present a polished look to visitors during the Olympic Games. Renovation projects include the Confucius Temple, the Imperial College, the Imperial Ancestral Temple and 28 other historical and cultural sites.

(By Han Manman)

Letters from a Chinese soldier in Iraq

By Huang Daohen

A Chinese-American soldier in Baghdad, Iraq, is blogging about his wartime life and posting daily photos from Baghdad.

Chen Guo, 23, titled his blog "Stryker," after US military's main troop-carrying vehicle. His posts have attracted nearly 1.3 million hits on MySpace's Chinese version.

Chen emigrated from China to the US with his family in early 2005 and became a US citizen. Six months later he joined the army. He was sent to Georgia for basic training.

"Basic training is hard," Chen said. The recruits' first ordeal after joining the US army was being shaved into the uniform flat-top haircut, which Chen said made all the recruits look "really stupid."

What was worse to Chen was that all the instructors looked the same as in *Full Metal Jacket*, but "acted in a more cruel and frenzied style." During training, two recruits committed suicide and six escaped, Chen wrote in his post last December.

After graduation, he was assigned to serve at a military base in Washington DC for eight months, and his unit was deployed to a military base in Germany.

Former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein was publicly executed on December 30 in 2006. During that period, days were tough for the US soldiers in Iraq. More and more US soldiers were killed. This figure reached 3,000 people at the end of that year.

The Bush administration decided to send more troops to Iraq, and one in four soldiers was called on: Chen was one of the "lucky" 25 percent.

August 11, 2007, was the day Chen arrived in Baghdad. "A totally different life has started – lack of sleep, endless patrol and continuous turmoil," Chen wrote at that time.

Risky daily patrols aside, the days in Iraq were boring, Chen wrote. The Jarheads got together to criticize the Bush administration, play video games, talk about their first love or discuss how to go AWOL.



Chen Guo in Iraq
Photo provided by Chen Guo's blog

The only time Chen can escape feeling of anxiety is when he hands out the candy to local children. "Watching the kids chasing after the vehicles and giving out candy makes me think of the Japanese imperial army in the old

Chinese movies," Chen said.

Before his time in Iraq, Chen decided to record his "meaningful" everyday life. However, to the young man's surprise, he quickly became famous in China after media exposure and attracted millions of loyal readers.

Some girls left messages showing their adoration and offered to marry Chen. Others asked questions about immigration to the US and how to join the army.

Chen said he was happy to see the positive response from fellow Chinese, but hoped his readers would pay more attention to the war instead of his private life.

The soldier continues to blog about his Iraqi tour of duty, as well as his dreams for a future career in the US government.

He said he hopes to be US Secretary of State, like Colin Powell, Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice. "Powell's parents were immigrants from Jamaica and Albright emigrated from The Czech Republic, so why can't the next secretary be an immigrant from China?" Chen said.

20 years of migrant life

By Jackie Zhang

A group of migrant workers are busy preparing a special exhibition in Picun, a small village in Chaoyang district. The group is trying to gather a variety of items to show people the changes that have occurred in migrant workers' lives over the last 20 years.

The exhibit will open to the public for free in May.

Gongyouzhijia, the exhibition organizer, is a non-profit social organization. Members refer to it as the Spiritual Home of Rural Migrants. Its former body was an art group formed by migrant workers.

"Migrant workers live a pallid existence, especially those who work on construction sites," Sun, the founder and a former music teacher in his Henan Province hometown, said.

"In my spare time, I wrote some songs to tell their stories. A group of art fans got together, and in 2002, the group got started," Sun said. Since then, he and his group have visited construction sites and communities where migrant workers live and performed in Beijing and other cities as well.

Gongyouzhijia also has a school to recruit children of migrant workers, an association to give workers study opportunities and an organization to educate workers about various laws needed to protect themselves.

But public services don't bring in the money Sun needs. He often turns to different foundations for financial support. "These foundations support us and provide money. It is only because of them that we can rent these houses for the exhibition," Sun said.

The idea of the exhibition came before the money. Once he found some deserted workshops in Picun. With the help of Oxfam, a non-governmental organization based in Hong Kong, they rented the houses and started to prepare for the exhibition.

So far, they have collected hundreds of items donated by migrant workers, including temporary residence permits, house rental receipts, work clothes, letters and photos.

"Our most-collected item is temporary residence permits. Each has a different story," Sun said. Stories would be written up and presented with the slips at the exhibition. "It is not an exhibition of cards and uniforms. It is an exhibition of lives."

"Every one wants a happy life. All parents hope their children attend university and have a bright future. Sometimes, reality doesn't match our expectations," Sun said.

The exhibit will open to the public for free in May. It will let people learn more about migrant workers and their lives.

Police get Olympic Rosetta Stone

By Wan Ran

To minimize difficulties police may have when communicating with foreigners during the coming Olympic Games, the Haidian Public Security Bureau is providing 4,000 officers with language conversion cards starting this week.

The printed cards show the flags of 37 countries and include English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Malaysian, along with corresponding Chinese translation.

When an officer has problems communicating with a foreigner, he can show the language card and hopefully discern which country the person is from. The officer can then refer the person to a capable Olympic language volunteer.

For more complicated problems, a language volunteer may be required to come to the scene.



A policeman in Haidian District trying to help a foreigner

Photo by Han Junwei

New toilet regs make emergencies less urgent

By Li Fenghua

New regulations for the capital's restrooms will keep them open and accessible to the public during business hours. Shopping malls, restaurants, hotels, gymnasiums and parking lots must keep their restrooms and latrines open to the public during business hours.

"The regulations were enacted for the upcoming Olympic Games, and it was posted on the Web site of the Office of Legislative Affairs

under the People's Government of Beijing Municipality to collect public opinion," Guo Weidong, chief of information of the Beijing Municipal Administration Committee, said.

The posted regulations do not include banks.

Much of the public response has called for the inclusion of banks, as banks are always crowded, and customers are forced to wait for a long time.

"I have to force myself to use

my toilet at home before going to the bank to withdraw my pension," an old patron surnamed Li said. "We old people have to use the toilet more frequently, and it is difficult to avoid embarrassment. I have to drink little water in the hours leading up to my bank visit."

Bank staff say the business area is too small to build a restroom, and some of the space is required to be left empty for security. Some banks, aware of the problem, are constructing public

toilets in new branches.

"Banks should provide basic services like a restroom. It is a way to show that customers come first, not just their money," Shi Chao, a committee member of the Beijing Political Consultative Conference, said.

The person in charge of the Beijing Municipality's Office of Legislative Affairs told reporters that the public opinions will be considered during legislation revisions.

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The procedure treats the small zones of skin, leaving surrounding tissue untouched and intact. These large unaffected areas act as a reservoir for more effective and rapid tissue healing and collagen production. The bottom line: new, healthier, smoother tissue in place of skin imperfections.

What To Expect?

Your physician will determine the ideal treatment plan for your needs. Generally, treatment involves two to four sessions, at four-week intervals. Right after treatment you may feel a light tingling sensation. You may experience slight swelling for a day or two. As new skin replaces dead tissue, your skin will flake, a sign that healing is underway. Your skin will look better immediately, and will steadily improve over the next few months.

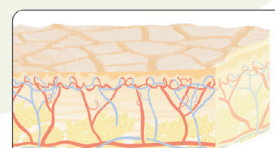


Does It Hurt?

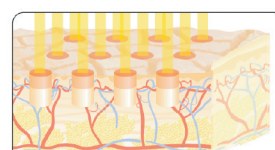
Far more comfortable than conventional laser skin resurfacing, Pixel skin resurfacing is experienced by most patients as a comfortable sensation.

Who Can Be Treated And On What Parts Of The Body?

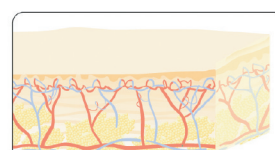
Pixel skin resurfacing can be used on patients of most skin types anywhere on the body. Since the procedure spares healthy tissue, it can be performed on delicate skin areas, such as the face, neck, chest and hands.



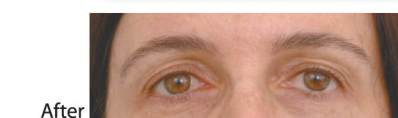
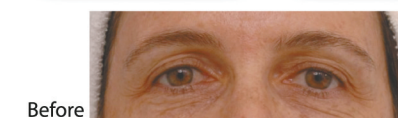
Before Treatment



During Pixel Skin Resurfacing



After Treatment



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Defense budget to get a boost

(Reuters) — The government needs to increase defense spending to keep pace with economic growth and overcome historic shortfalls, the military's newspaper said on Tuesday.

China's official defense budget for 2007 was US \$45 billion, an 18 percent gain on the previous budget that continued a string of double-digit military spending rises for a decade.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) official budget for 2008 is likely to be unveiled shortly before the national parliament meets for its annual session in early March.

The repeated rises have prompted worried calls from other countries for Beijing to explain more clearly how and where the PLA is spending its extra money.

The Pentagon has estimated China's true military budget could be more than double the public figure.

China's Liberation Army Daily warned of severe consequences if increases in defense spending did not continue.

The paper estimated that defense spending must keep rising until 2030 to make up for past tight budgets and to properly reflect China's growing economic strength.

Faced with international calls for greater military candor, the government said its intentions are peaceful and pointed to the much higher budget of the Pentagon.

The Bush administration asked for US \$484 billion for the Defense Department. That figure does not cover military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Expert comment

By Huang Daohen

The Ministry of Defense's information office will start functioning at the proper time, Cai Wu, director of the State Council Information Office, said during an interview with the CCTV.

The establishment of a news briefing system and an information office has been long discussed within the Ministry of National Defense, Cai said.

After the Cold War, a major trend in the world's military is openness and transparency. A spokesman for the Ministry of National Defense has become the international practice.

The information office will provide information on the country's national defense and military buildup for domestic and international media, Cai said.

The government has applied

the news briefing system to most central government departments and local governments since 2003. Twelve departments, including the Ministry of Commerce, the State Food and Drug Administration and the Beijing Organizing Committee of Olympic Games, started holding press conferences on a regular basis in 2007. The system turned out to be a success, he said.

As for the defense budget, military expert Zhang Zhaozhong urged that a long-term budget rise is a necessity.

When economic conditions improve, the defense spending shortfall must be compensated. Otherwise there will be dire consequences, he said.

"Now the time has come when we must increase the spending to make up for historic shortfalls," Zhang said.

Greenspan commends economic reforms

(AP) — Former US Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan expressed his appreciation for China's experience in economic reforms and investment promotion, local media said Tuesday.

Greenspan, at the ninth Jeddah Economic Forum in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, said Monday the rapid development of China's economy is mainly due to its gradual and diversified economic reforms, its ability to attract and use foreign investment and the healthy interaction between state-owned and private enterprises.

Those measures and factors have prevented turbulence in China's society, he said.

Poison dumplings sabotaged

(Reuters) — Chinese-made dumplings which made 10 people sick in Japan had been sabotaged, most probably in Japan, China's security and quality watchdogs said yesterday.

"The poisoning incident in Japan caused by dumplings imported from a food plant in northern China, was a special case of sabotage and it's unlikely it happened in China," Xinhua news agency said, quoting health officials.

"After comprehensive investigation, we believe there's little chance that methamidophos (a pesticide) was put into dumplings in China," Xinhua quoted Yu Xinmin, deputy director of the criminal investigation bureau with the Ministry of Public Security, at a news conference.

The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said it had come to the same conclusion after finding no harmful chemicals in samples and no abnormal operations on the part of the Chinese producer.

Global envoys gather at tourist forum



By Zhang Dongya

Ambassadors, counselors and envoys from Singapore, Algeria, Bengal and other eighteen countries attended the International tourism and world harmony forum in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, on Wednesday.

They visited Zhongshan Mausoleum, Plum Blossom Hill, Qinhuai River and other famous places of interest in the city.

The forum is an annual event held by China National Tourism Administration, World Tourism Organization and Jiangsu Provincial Government.

IC Photo

Muggy summer may be Olympians' toughest opponent

(Reuters) — Eat an orange. Wear a face mask. Train elsewhere and fly in at the last possible moment to compete.

These are some of the strategies suggested for Olympic athletes planning to compete in Beijing, where a thick cloud of

smog often blankets one of the world's most polluted cities.

The US teams expect Beijing's air "to reach a safe and suitable standard for elite competition," Darryl Seibel of the US Olympic Committee said.

It is likely to be hot and humid. The average August tem-

perature in Beijing is 29.5 C, with relative humidity of 69 percent. This combination puts Beijing's heat index in the "caution" range, US sports officials have said.

But August is also likely to be rainy, and that could cut down on sooty particles in the air.

Officials reportedly plan to keep half of Beijing's 3 million cars off the roads during the Games, which begin August 8. Authorities have also ordered Beijing and five surrounding provinces to cut industrial pollution for two months from late July.

Expert comment

By Han Manman

The Beijing Meteorological Bureau has played down fears that Beijing would be unusually warm and humid for athletes during the Olympics in August.

Guo Liwen, head of the bureau's climate center told Xinhua News there is a 0.4 percent chance for Beijing to experience temperatures above 35 C during the 2008 Olympics in August, and the Beijing meteorological bureau forecasts 24.9 C, relatively comfortable weather

for the athletes.

He said the 29.8 C average for Beijing in August cited by foreign media is incorrect. "The 29.8 C figure is the average highest temperature in August," he said.

Guo also said autumn is Beijing's best time of the year, and the temperature and humidity in Beijing will decline gradually after August 7.

"Even if the rare extreme weather hits Beijing in August, people will not feel the humidity.

High humidity will not accompany the hot weather in August because the peaks differ," Wang Yubin, deputy chief engineer with the Beijing Meteorological Bureau, said.

The bureau's research shows that the relative humidity was 77 percent in August during the past three decades. The heat index of the Beijing Olympics remained at the same level as Barcelona and lower than that of Atlanta and Athens.

Wang said the Beijing Mete-

orological Bureau is capable of providing weather forecasts for Beijing and other co-host cities six days in advance, as well as hour-by-hour forecasts for Olympic venues.

The Beijing Meteorological Bureau has edited a brochure for its weather forecast service, which will be distributed among athletes and coaches.

The city will open an English-speaking weather service hot line that can be dialed as 12121 during the Olympic Games, he said.

Biggest plastic bag maker closes after ban

(Guardian) — The war against white pollution has claimed its first large-scale victim with the closure of the country's biggest plastic bag manufacturer.

The shutdown of Suiping Huaqiang Plastic, which employs 20,000 people, highlighted the social costs of a government drive to clean up one of the world's most polluted environments.

It comes less than two months after the state banned production of ultra-thin bags and ordered supermarkets to stop giving away free carriers by June 1.

That surprise move was hailed by Greenpeace, Earthwatch and other green groups as a sign of growing environmental awareness in China.

But it was a disaster for the company, which earned most of its 2.2 billion yuan income from the annual production of 250,000 tons of bags.

The firm ceased production in mid-January, after the government announced the new ban on bags less than 0.025mm thick.

Companies must go green before going public

By Annie Wei

Ten companies had to delay their initial public offerings as their applications did not meet the environmental impact assessment.

Since 2007, listed companies have faced supervision not only by the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), but also the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC).

SEPA released a new regulation Monday, in which companies in 13 high-polluting industries must pass environmental impact assessments

before an IPO or merger. These include thermal power generation, iron and steel production, cement and electrolyte aluminum industries.

The regulations can help make environmental disclosure a key criterion for companies raising funds from the Chinese capital markets, Pan Yue, deputy director of SEPA, said.

The move may help curb expansion of high-polluting and energy-intensive industries.

SEPA expects this green securities scheme to inject the green factor into the nation's

financial policies.

The results of the inspections – to be conducted by SEPA specialists – will be a necessary part of information disclosure to the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) for IPOs or refinancing.

Domestic firms have to report on environmental conduct through the 36 months prior to floating of shares. Deliberate cover-ups are subject to administrative penalties and criminal charges.

Making environmental reporting compulsory is a joint effort of

SEPA and the CSRC, according to SEPA's announcement. The two agencies worked together to review information submitted by 37 companies that applied for IPO last year.

SEPA and CSRC will set up a coordination and communication system to release environmental impact assessments of all listed companies.

Lu Ping, an energy industry analyst from Merchant Securities, said a company's stock price may be affected if SEPA finds it in violation of environmental laws.

Sovereign fund hiring foreign fund managers

(Reuters) – China Investment Corp, the country's US \$200 billion sovereign wealth fund, is hiring foreign fund managers to invest in hedge funds, private equity, fixed income and equity assets, its general manager said on Thursday.

Gao Xiqing told reporters that he hoped the managers would be hired within the next several months.

The fund was set up last year as China sought to achieve greater returns on part of its massive foreign exchange reserves.

McDonald's tries home delivery to push China sales

By Huang Daohen

McDonald's, the world's biggest fast-food chain, has begun offering home delivery in Shanghai, aiming to build a model in China to boost sales and help it catch up with rival Yum! Brands in the world's most populous country.

McDonald's has built up a fleet of 300 motorcycles over the past five months to deliver hamburgers from 42 restaurants in Shanghai covering half the city's 14 million population, Shanghai General Manager Leo Li said in an interview.

"Shanghai people are getting busier and busier, and they're hungry for time," Li said.

McDonald's is stepping up its expansion in China, where rival Yum operates twice as many restaurants and started home delivery several years ago to complement dining at its more than 2,000 KFC and Pizza Hut outlets across the country.

Pine Valley Beijing Open set to tee off

By Huang Daohen

The 2008 Pine Valley Beijing Open, an event for Asian golf in Beijing organized by the Reignwood Group, will run from May 8 to 11 in Changping district.

This year's event, with an increased US \$1 million prize purse, has been co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour, Japan Golf Tour Organization (JGTO), and China Golf Association. It is also for the first time for a JGTO event to be played outside of Japan.

The event will draw 156 players from China, Japan and other Asian countries, including top players such as Zhang Lianwei and Liang Wenchong.

Kyi Hla Han, executive chairman of the Asian Tour, praised the event and the organizer's preparation. "The event offers young talents in Asia a unique opportunity to compete on the world stage with some of the golf world's top players," Han said.

Personal loans easier to get in Beijing

By Li Fenghua

Standard Chartered Bank introduced its first insecure personal loan in Beijing on Monday. Borrowers can apply for a loan without providing any collateral such as property or a deposit.

Loans of between 8,000 to 200,000 yuan will carry a term of 6 month or 1 to 4 years. Standard Chartered Bank will levy a fixed interest rate to the borrowers to reduce the risk of increase in the interest rate. The annual interest rate for the loan will vary from 8 to 10 percent according to the applicant's amount, the term of the loan and his credit status.

"Such loans should not be used to buy houses or invest in the stock market, but for popular consumption such as wedding ceremonies, decorations, travel or vehicle purchase," Tang Yu, general manager of the personal loan department of the Standard Chartered Bank, said.

"Key customers will be 25 to 39 years old with stable work and a steady income. Their monthly pay should be greater than 3,000 yuan," Tang said. "This age group has a much higher chance of getting a raise. They pursue high-quality of life and have positive expectations for their future, and thus need higher loans."

To ensure loans are not used for other purposes, the bank will sign a contract with the borrower and demand certificates to show how its money was spent. The bank may withdraw its loan at any time, and extra fines can be imposed if it finds the money was used to purchase a home or invest in the stock market.

"Required materials include an application, ID, a certificate of income and a personal credit report. The loan can be handed out to the borrower as quickly as within four days if all materials are prepared," Tang said.

Rayli joins Glamour Magazine in fashion drive



By Huang Daohen

Rayli group, the nation's largest fashion magazine publisher, joined forces Tuesday with Japan's Kodansha group to launch a new fashion magazine for Chinese ladies.

The new magazine Ruyli Fashion Vanguard will cooperate with the Glamour

Magazine, published by the Kodansha group, in various fields including the magazine's content and design.

The magazine aims to provide integrated fashion information between the oriental style and the international trend.

Photo provided by Rayli group

Shares rise as halt of excess

Shares edged up 1.09 percent on Tuesday, as liquidity concerns were eased by regulators' call for more cautious refinancing moves.

The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index closed at 4,238.18, a gain of 45.65 points. The Shenzhen Component Index, however, lost 158.25 points, or 1.02 percent, to end at 15,328.42.

The China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) issued a statement on Monday evening in which it warned companies against "malicious money grabbing," urging them to take investor demand into account when drawing up plans for raising funds through share offerings.

"Listed companies should consider market conditions, investor sentiment and their own

funding needs before deciding the timing and size of refinancing," the commission said.

Analysts said that the move, combined with companies' denial of refinancing rumors, mitigated investors' fears but wouldn't fully resolve the liquidity strain.

PetroChina, which accounts for around 25 percent of the Shanghai index, gained 2.24 percent to 22.40 yuan, and Sinopec, the largest oil refiner, rose 3.52 percent to 16.76 yuan.

China Life surged 4.97 percent to 37.20 yuan. Ping An Insurance climbed to 68.04 yuan.

There remained a gap of perhaps hundreds of billions of yuan between the demand and supply of funds in the market, Zhang Lei, an analyst with Qilu Securities, said.

Zhang said that more policies to cut new offerings, rein in large-scale refinancing and approve more fund releases were necessary.

Locked-up shares that are due to become tradable again this year will need to absorb 1.57 trillion yuan in total, while newly-released or split funds could rise at most 129 billion yuan, Zhang said.

The CSRC has tried to improve liquidity by accelerating the release of new stock funds and experimenting with fund companies on new channels of stock investment. Six stock funds have been approved for release this month, which was viewed as a clear policy signal to shore up the stock market.

(Agencies)

Peking Opera goes back to school



A student from the Beijing Opera Art Vacation School learns make-up during a lesson. The Peking Opera's return draws public concern.

Photo by Liu Yu

By Han Manman

Surprised students in Beijing's 20 primary and secondary schools found their grandfathers' favorite Peking Opera pieces added to their music class repertoire as the new semester began on Monday.

The China Ministry of

Education last week announced a pilot program to teach students in primary and secondary schools traditional Peking Opera. The program involves 200 schools in 10 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions throughout China.

"The opera classes are, by

no means a nationwide compulsory class, but simply pilot programs implemented in certain schools from March to July next year with the ministry soliciting opinions from all circles," Ministry spokesman Wang Xuming said.

Peking Opera, known as Chi-

na's national opera, is facing danger of extinction as its slow pace and convoluted lyrics have scared away the younger generation which prefers pop music.

The project added 15 pieces of Peking Opera, including both classical and modern style, into music courses for students.

The news, however, has aroused controversy amongst the public, with some saying that untrained teachers and forced instruction might drive students away completely. In a survey by Netease, a news portal in China, nearly 70 percent of the voters were against the project.

Comment

Meaningful move

I support this project wholeheartedly. Interest should be fostered from childhood. I myself became fascinated with Peking Opera while in primary school. It eventually became my lifetime career.

— Zhu Shihui, local Peking Opera performer

Eager beaver

I am expecting my first music

class in Peking Opera and I look forward to wearing the fancy facial makeup.

— Zhang Yaoyin, local student

Exclusively Beijing

Tastes differ from place to place. Peking Opera should be taught only in Beijing. Our Yueju Opera is much more beautiful and it is the one that should be added to the course, not Peking Opera.

— netizen in Zhejiang Province

Reluctant teacher

Peking Opera is an ancient sophisticated art form which requires years of professional training for one to excel. Even I do not know how to perform the almost forgotten art form and have no interest in it. How could I teach it?

— local music teacher

Watchers, not doers

From my years of teaching experience, it might be more

workable and beneficial to the children if we selected some well-known Peking Opera pieces to show to them in class and teach them how to appreciate the form. They might be better as audience members rather than performers.

— music teacher, Wuhan

Forced learning fades interest

Such courses should be

optional, if the students are forced to learn, it might make them totally lose interest.

— Little Monkey, netizen

Lighten up

I think that the plan is not aimed to foster Peking Opera artists or fans. It just opens a door to children, giving them a chance to develop interests in traditional culture.

— Wu Jiang, official

Rewards for relinquishing seats

By Wan Ran

Starting February 22, an action dubbed "the day of giving seats" will take effect on all the buses and subways on the 22nd of every month. It is being put in place on behalf of old and disabled people, children, patients and expectant mothers. There are four stages involved: promotion, popularization, practice and consolidation.

During this action, if some one gives a seat to those aforementioned persons, they can get a "love card" which is equal to five jiao when it goes to the fourth stage, there will be a big rewarding assembly. Media will expose people who do not give up seats at the third stage.

The Beijing Municipal Government wants to pay more attention to social problems, selfish passengers being one of them. Last year, one of the officials said that they must carry out some definite activities to create a more civilized atmo-



A senior criticizing a young lady who was not willing to give up her seat on subway line two last Friday. Whether or not the young people should give their seats to the old draws controversy.

IC Photo

sphere because people all over the world will pay attention to Beijing during the Olympic Games arrives.

A new public service announcement will be broadcast on several television stations and Internet sites. Beijing will also push the idea of giving up seats into

schools, companies and government organizations to force the action to become a habit when people go out. Citizens can get the "love card" from drivers and conductors. In the future, passengers can also get other awards if they accumulate a certain quantity of "love cards."

Comment

Surrendering seats should be rewarded

It is a good policy that will improve the quality of citizens and the degree of civilization. Giving a love card is a kind of affirmation for giving seats to other people.

As for exposing people who do not offer seats, I don't think it's a violation of human rights; it may just damage the reputation.

— Hu Yi, a journalist

Violates privacy

I do not agree with the policy. Giving up seats is not law. People do not need to comply.

The most important thing is that the activity of exposing wrong-doers on video violates people's privacy. Although it is in a public place, people have no right to do this.

— Andy Xu, a senior student

Thinking of others

I strongly agree with this policy. Some people do not real-

ize the importance of thinking of others who really need a seat. If I am getting old, I would need a seat on the bus or subway. Carrying out this policy will make us think in a different way.

— Mingming, an official

Short-lived love

Giving presents and exposing people in public won't work for long. In fact, giving up seats is a kind of inner morality that cannot be changed by outside pressure.

Maybe it will have good effects at the start, but it cannot last.

— He Zheng, a teacher

Standing up for oneself

I don't understand why Chinese people always let me sit on the buses. Although I am 65 now, I'm not too old to stand up for myself on a bus.

But I also don't want to let people think that I am an old man who does not care about himself by not accepting help.

— David Johnson, tourist



Seasoned maestro rewards Chinese fans

Greek director flies with 'The Birds'

By Han Manman

The theatrical events of the Cultural Year of Greece in China began with the most avant-garde production of an Ancient Greek drama, *The Birds*, performed by the Greek Art Theatre's Karolos Koun on Wednesday night.

Diagoras Chronopoulos, artistic director of the Greek Art Theater said he chose to bring Athenian playwright Aristophanes's utopian comedy, *The Birds* to Beijing not only because the theme of the drama – to escape the dark side of society and seek the utopian world – is many modern peoples' "desire," but also because 2008 is the 100th year of the birth of Karolos Koun, the most renowned Greek director.

Chronopoulos said attending the performance of *The Birds*, one can understand the elements of "tradition" and "culture" that Koun uses in all his performances of ancient drama.

"I participated as a student of the Drama School of the Greek Art Theatre in the first performance of the *The Birds* in 1959," Chronopoulos said, adding that, at that time, they deeply felt Koun's

inspiration, his intensity and signature style of acting that communicated to his actors in order to teach them to fulfill his vision for any comedy of Aristophanes.

Now, many years later, this previous student has already become a renowned director in Greece and directs his teacher's drama. Chronopoulos has been asked many times if there are any comparisons with his teacher's style in this Beijing tour. And he always answers, "Karolos Koun was my admired teacher. Don't ask me to make a comparison. The great artists allow no comparisons."

Athenian playwright Aristophanes (448-385BC) is considered one of the greatest comedy writers in literary history. His work *The Birds* is considered the most successful post-war Greek dramatic production to travel the world. *The Birds* tells the story of two Athenians who are tired of the law courts, politics, false oracles, and military antics of their fellow citizens, and they resolve to seek out a place to live where they can exist in peace and tranquility.



A scene from *The Birds*.

Photo provided by Greek Embassy

By Gan Tian

Music conductor Lorin Maazel, 77, gave two concerts with the New York Philharmonic at the National Center for the Performing Arts last Saturday and Sunday, bringing alive the works of Rossini, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak and Brahms.

By request, Maazel encoored with several other pieces, including the famous *L'arlesienne* by Bizet for the climax performance.

It was the fourth time the conductor had visited the city. Maazel mentioned that he was extremely impressed by the newly-opened center. He said jokingly that, "not to offend" the staffs at the Sydney Opera House and other architectures in the world, the center was the best he had ever seen. "It is very acoustic-friendly," he said.

The master said he paid much more attention to the children's

education program, so much of the tour centered around children's music instruction. Maazel has two children, one of whom accompanied him during the tour.

"I watched them grow. I know how important it is. When we saw those children learning to sing, we all thought that was the most beautiful scene we had ever seen," the conductor said.

He said that the fans could use Podcast to enjoy the show live online. When he and Zarin Mehta, president and executive director of the Philharmonic, talked about this technology, the translator and press did not catch what they meant. However, Maazel asked Chinese audiences to click on his Web site to enjoy the show.

The famous director also gave excellent comments about some Chinese members in the New York Philharmonic. He men-

tioned that Zhang Xian was very talented and hardworking. He said more Chinese musicians should go onto the international stage to perform.

The conductor actually started New York Philharmonic's Asia 2008 Tour on February 11. They have been very successful in Taipei, Kaohsiung, Hong Kong and Shanghai. The maestro and the orchestra have already wrapped up their Asia tour following the Pyongyang and Seoul concerts.

Maazel has led more than 150 orchestras in more than 5,000 opera and concert performances. He became music director of the New York Philharmonic in 2002. He is also music director of the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, Spain and Italy's Simphonica Toscanini.

Photo provided by National Center for the Performing Arts

Montessori educates China's cherubs

By Jackie Zhang

Marilyn Stewart and Marlene Barron, two experienced and authoritative women from the US, came to Beijing and met with Chinese educators and parents Monday evening. While letting more Chinese parents understand the concept of Montessori, Stewart and Barron also told them ways of distinguishing unauthorized Montessori schools from authorized ones.

Created over 100 years ago, Montessori is an educational system designed for children's early education by Maria Montessori, the first woman to graduate from a medical college in Italy. From the establishment of the first Montessori school in 1907, Montessori has now spread all over Europe and the US. However in China, Montessori is still in its infancy.

Stewart, the president of the American Montessori Society (AMS) and Barron, commissioner with the Montessori Accreditation Council on Teacher Education (MACTE), gave a lecture Monday evening, briefly describ-



Marlene Barron plays with kids at Eton International Bilingual School.

Photo provided by Anja

ing Montessori.

Montessori is child-centered rather than adult-centered system. It gives children space and opportunities to accomplish everything independently in a social environment. The pictures and sentences by kids, although most of the spelling and sentences were hard to read, showed people how creative and talented children could be.

Throughout the whole lecture, kids who came with their parents, walked around the room freely. Sometimes, they even cried or called for mum loudly. Regardless, they were not restricted. They

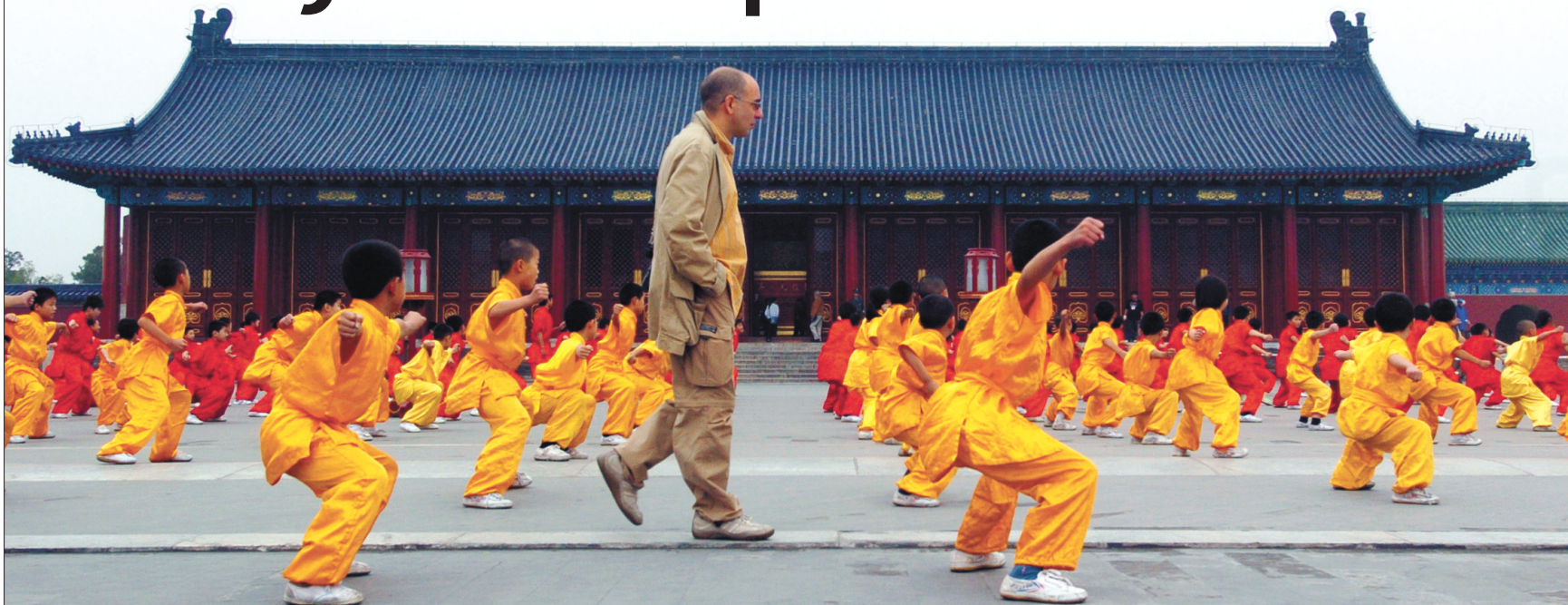
had a free space to express themselves and did what they liked.

Stewart and Barron were pleased to see that more and more Chinese elderly educational academies were professionalizing their early childhood education programs in properly-designed classes.

However, some unauthorized schools and kindergartens are trying to attract more children using the name Montessori.

Stewart suggested that a good way to check whether a school is Montessori or not is to log onto AMS' Web site to check their list.

Foreign directors find Beijing ready to compete



Italian director Giuseppe Tornatore explores Chinese kung fu.

Photos provided by Beijing Foreign Culture Exchanges Center

By Gan Tian

The Vision Beijing project, which brought five international directors to capture Beijing as they saw it, released their five short films yesterday.

Giuseppe Tornatore from Italy, Majid Majidi from Iran, Patrice Leconte from France, Daryl Goodrich from Great Britain and Andrew Lau Wai-Keung from Hong Kong came during last year to record the people's enthusiastic preparations.

The final product is an audio-video record rich with insight into what may become known as the "People's Olympics."

The passionate and inspirational films portray the beauty and charm of the ancient-but-rapidly-modernizing metropolis and host of the 2008 Olympics.



Iranian director Majid Majidi (second from left) at the Forbidden City.

Iranian eye – children, purity and love

Iranian director Majid Majidi made his first trip here not long ago. His favorite subject is children.

His short movie features students in yellow, blue, green, purple and red clothes before a statue of the great writer Lu Xun, while they listen to a speech by their teacher. Students write their thoughts and wishes on balloons.

He admitted it was hard for him to capture China's 5,000-year history in a five-minute movie. However, he made up his mind after he visited several schools in town. "I was attracted by the children's purity," he said.

Majidi even made friends with many children. When he was shooting the film, he communicated with those children in simple English and gestures. They taught him some Chinese games like *diu shabao*, sand bag tossing, and *xiazi moren*, a game where the blind player has to catch others.

"They are really interesting. Seeing those children can give you a feel for Chinese culture," the director said.

The Iranian director plans to shoot another film about the growing happiness and pains of the youth in Shishahai Sports School.

French eye – makes an impression

French director Patrice Leconte decided to make his short film with impressionist characteristics when he made his first trip here at the end of last year. "Beijing's romance is never less than that of Paris, so my film, like Monet's impressionism, will not focus on details but will treat the imagination. This unique style will inspire people to come to Beijing," he said.

To achieve his effect, Leconte shot his Monet-style *Beijing: A Film Impressionistic*, in which he captured the city's quiet parks, the hum of its streets, its graceful kites and the Olympic venues.

He invited a composer to write a short piece of music especially for his film. "The music is very Westernized, but the scenes are very Chinese," the director said.



Patrice Leconte (right) films in the street.

Hong Kong eye – stay for the food

Andrew Lau Wai-Keung, from Hong Kong, was the only Chinese director invited to participate in *Vision Beijing*.

Lau, a film director and cinematographer, is also a gourmet. In his eyes, nothing was more attractive than the city's food. Lau said he had been fascinated with Chinese cuisine for a long time.

"The committee found exactly the right person to shoot food," he said at the press conference.

"Beijing's food, like [its] culture, represents a distillation of the best the world has to offer; it is really worthy of appreciation and respect," he said. He hoped to share these cuisines through his film and to let people experience Beijing's grand and marvelous catering culture and the Chinese spirit.

Italian eye – time for reunion



Giuseppe Tornatore (right) finds his passion in a park.

Though here for the first time, Italian director Giuseppe Tornatore was inspired instantly when he saw someone practicing tai-chi.

"I am touched by Beijingers' faith in the future, their respect for tradition and their passion for life," Tornatore said. The comment was his inspiration for *Reunion*.

Tornatore loved to walk in Shishahai area, and spent much of his time there speaking to old actors.

When the director was asked to pick which traditional food most represents the city, he said without hesitation it should be Beijing Roast Duck. "Chinese cuisine is so great. Everyone should come here and taste," he said.

British eye – sports capital

British director Daryl Goodrich, who made a film about London's bid for the 2012 Olympic Games, made another to focus on Beijing's sporting spirit.

His five-minute film *Belief* focused on Beijing as it prepares for the Games, and the hard work and thrill of athletic competition. The story dates back to 1908, when a young journalist is shown writing an article about China's Olympic dream.

He went to discover the city's athletes who are preparing the Games. He went to the training center and talked to many athletes. "I found that the athlete's spirit could be seen everywhere in the city," he said. What impressed him most was that he could see many people, especially old people, rising early for morning exercise in the park.

"In London, you seldom see people waking up so early," he said.

The audience questioned why he chose to direct instead of act. He said he was a retired athlete, and found his career through a combination of sport and film-making. "Sports are full of passion and excitement, like Beijing," he said.

Two-week literacy festival opens at The Bookworm

By Annie Wei

Since opening its venue at Gongti Nanlu, The Bookworm, a popular book cafe, has held interesting literary events like authors giving speeches and new book releases.

The upcoming International Literary Festival starting next Thursday is considered the biggest since the store's opening, with 40 honored speakers. It is the first time the festival has received sponsorships, which make it possible to invite writers from abroad to attend the event.

These guests have received a number of literary awards abroad and they work in a diversity of styles and address different themes in their fiction, poetry, children's books, music, film-making and journalism.

An increasing number of local and expat readers have shown an interest in literary topics, so this time, the Bookworm is controlling ticket sales to limit the number of attendants for each event.

As of Tuesday, 2,500 tickets were sold; tickets for three events



Rob Gifford, author of *China Road*, giving a speech in The Bookworm, will join in the festival as well.

Photo provided by The Bookworm

were sold out, Jenny Niven, the festival manager, said.

The three events are: Beijing Portrait of a City, a book launch and a Writers Cabaret on March 8. In addition, Wolf Totem will have another book launch on March 13.

Tickets to events connected to China sold best, Niven said.

She recommends "China in Fiction," the festival's closing event on March 20, which will be presented by Zhu Wen and Yiyun Li. Zhu Wen is a writer and filmmaker and his

writing is a critical take on Chinese contemporary society. Both writers were born in China and lived abroad for many years.

Niven said that these two Chinese writers create something special in the short fiction mode. Their writing has strong-dialogue style in a very contemporary way.

There will be one event presented in Chinese by Xu Zhiyuan, a good representative for modern and ambitious Chinese intellectuals. Xu is the publisher of *Life*

magazine, as well as a columnist for the Chinese *Financial Times* and *Asiaweek*.

Xu said his topic would be the same theme as his latest book, *China In Time*, which reflects the thoughts and feelings of change in his generation, the 30-somethings in China.

Since The Bookworm has its stores in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, and Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, one-third of the speakers will go to the other secondary cities for the festival.

Children's Panel puts kids first

By He Jianwei

Zulipinuer Ruze, 16, a student from Yining, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, will attend a meeting for the global Children's Panel held in Britain next month, as a representative of children in Southeast Asia, according to a decision made last Thursday at the Second National Children Committee's Meeting in Beijing.

Zulipinuer, the chairperson of the National Children's Committee for Save the Children UK-China Program, will discuss the issues concerning children with officials from other countries and other non-

governmental organizations during one week.

"I hope to disseminate necessary messages, especially to people with very close links to children and create a happier living environment for children through the Children's Panel," she said.

Before she attended the Children's Panel, Save the Children China Program's children representatives and observers made a report about children's living status in China.

They identified four main areas as the biggest concerns regarding Chinese children,

including the problems and issues of education, discrimination, families and legal issues.

Zulipinuer believes although many children have a happy life, they face many difficulties such as unequal status in the family, social discrimination, no respect for their ideas and opinions, inability to achieve desires and lack of support.

"I hope this panel can work out solutions to some key problems faced by children, such as being trafficked or abused and no access to school due to a poor family situation, death of parents or refusal

from parents," she said.

In addition, Zulipinuer will share some personal experiences with the Children's Panel. "Our teaching methods and records of child-led interviews with children can be helpful. It is a more effective way to understand them through such interviews than through adults," she said.

Save the Children UK set up a global Children's Panel last year, aiming to increase the involvement of children. Members of the Children's Panel can communicate with each other, share experiences and opinions.

Event

Lecture: Traditional and Contemporary Chinese New Year Paintings

Pu Songnian, professor at the China Fine Arts Academy, will give a talk on traditional and contemporary Chinese folk paintings, focusing on folk New Year paintings, from ancient times to the Cultural Revolution period and up to present day. Pu is a member of the specialist committee of the China National Intangible Heritage Protection Committee, and author of *China Folk Arts History*.

Where: Chinese Culture Club, Kent Center, No 29 Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 5, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Cost: 50 yuan

Tel: 6432 9341 (Monday - Friday, 9 am - 6 pm), 6432 1041 (weekday mornings and evenings; and weekends, rerouted to mobile phone)

Seminar: Multicultural Understanding and Efficiency

The Swedish Chamber of Commerce will organize a seminar, which will identify some of the cross-cultural misunderstandings that can arise in the work place. As more foreigners are coming to China to catch the wave of the economic boom, many have confronted difficulties in working efficiently and effectively due to cultural differences. Through personal work experience in Europe, America, and China, as well as his understanding of how both cultures behave, Lawrence Lo, the founder of LHY Etiquette Consultancy, will tackle and analyze some problem areas that one might encounter and offer solutions.

Where: Ballroom 1, first floor of Radisson SAS Hotel, A 6, Bei Sanhuan Dong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 4, 8 am - 10 am

Cost: members free of charge; non members, 300 yuan

(By He Jianwei)

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Four alternative spots for bird's eye view

By He Jianwei

People who take pictures of the Bird's Nest on Beichen Bridge will be fined 200 yuan, according to a new regulation from the Traffic Information Management announced last weekend.

The unique structure of the Bird's Nest draws many tourists and photographers. Excluding Beichen Bridge, the following places are suggested as good spots for curious visitors to take pictures.

Bei Sihuan Zhong Lu side road

At the bus station to the south of Beichen Bridge, people can take a panoramic view of the Bird's Nest. It is about a kilometer away from the Olympics structure.

It is a prime spot for people to take pictures. There are no objects blocking the view of the Bird's Nest and the resulting size of the photo print is great.

The only thing you have to be careful about is the traffic on the Fourth Ring Road.

Beijing Olympic Green Entrance

The entrance to Beijing Olympic Green is about 200 to 300 meters away from the Bird's Nest. People can take pictures from a worm's eye perspective.

The distance is not very far but, between the entrance and the Bird's Nest, are six big trees blocking the view.

Although the entrance is under construction, over 1,000 people will take pictures here, the security guard at the entrance said.

Beijing Olympic Green's northeast gate

The northeast gate is much closer to the Nest at about 200 meters. But people can only take a picture of one section, because a building blocks off most of the view of the structure.

The overpass east to Beichen Xi Qiao

On the overpass, a few people snap pictures. It is a great distance from the Bird's Nest, almost 2 kilometers away but at that distance, photos can get the whole structure in the frame.

Available parking

You can park your cars in the parking lot at the International Convention Center. It only takes five minutes to walk to the Beijing Olympic Green. The parking fee is 1 yuan per hour.

You can also park at the Beijing Olympic Sports Center then walk about 15 mins.



The National Stadium

CFP Photo

Outdoor skiing venues close next month

By Annie Wei

If you want to upgrade your skiing skills and maintain your tight budget, these one or two weeks might be a good time to do just that.

The temperature quickly rises after Chinese New Year. Outdoor skiing resorts are scheduled to close soon so most of them are offering more than 50 percent discount on the usual price when you make reservation calls.

Mr Sun, manager of Yunfoushan Ski Resort said that, although the skiing resort temperature was two or three degrees below downtown, it was still too high for snow.

Snow World, another skiing venue, said that man-made snow was getting more difficult as the prefabricated snow melted easily.

Mr Lou from Yuyang Ski resort said that there were only 3,000 skiers and snowboarders last weekend, which was 1,000 less compared to the other winter weekends.

Lianhuashan Ski resort reported that the number of skiers and snowboarders had dropped by one half.

Many places came out with special deals over the last few weeks.

Below is a price table for your comparison.

| Venue/phone number | Closing time | Original price | Special offer now |
|---|--------------------|---|--|
| Shijinglou Ski Resort 6919 1617/15/14/13 | March 2 | 100 yuan for two hours and 220 yuan for a whole day during weekdays; 150 yuan for two hours and 360 yuan for a whole day on the weekend | None |
| Yunfoushan Ski Resort 5165 0066 | In the early March | 50 yuan per hour for a weekday and 70 yuan per hour on the weekend. The entrance fee is 20 yuan. | 50 yuan per hour and a 10 yuan entrance fee |
| Snow world Ski Resort 8976 1899 | In the early March | 200 yuan per day on weekdays and 340 yuan per day on the weekends. Additional 20 yuan entrance fee. | 40 yuan per day on weekdays and 50 yuan per day on the weekend |
| Yuyang Ski Resort 8483 4123 | Closes on March 10 | 200 yuan per day on weekdays and 360 yuan per day on the weekend | Women are free on March 8, 60 yuan per day on weekdays and 80 yuan on the weekends |
| Nanshan Ski 8909 1909 | Closes on March 17 | 220 yuan per day on weekdays and 360 yuan per day on the weekends. Additional 20 yuan for entrance | 80 yuan per day on weekdays and 110 yuan per day on the weekends |
| Badaling Ski Resort 5905 9150 or 8483 4123 | Closes on March 10 | 170 yuan per day on weekdays, 240 yuan per day on the weekend. Additional 20 yuan for entrance | 78 yuan per day on weekdays and 98 yuan per day on the weekends |



Snowboarding at Shijinglong Ski Resort
Photo by Dongfang

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to:
weiyang@ynet.com

Could you recommend a nice courtyard restaurant in "Central Beijing"? The kind of place where one could book an evening or arrange a nice birthday party for a big crowd? And I don't mean the courtyard restaurant next to Forbidden City.

There are several courtyard restaurants where you can go:

Huajiyayuan

Where: 235 Dongzhimen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng District

Tel: 6405 1908

The Noble Restaurant/Bar

Where: Bajiaoting, Deshengmen Nei Dajie, Xicheng District

Tel: 6616 0725

A friend of mine has just received an invitational letter to study at a university in the US. He is anxious to begin his studies but he is worried about the upcoming interview at the US embassy. Does anyone have any past experiences with these student visa interviews at the embassy that they could share?

He needs to illustrate he has strong ties to China and that he will return to China and not attempt to find a job in the US. Basically, he needs to tell the consulate that he is seeking the opportunity of education in America to improve his opportunities for work in China and it will make him more competitive. But he should be prepared for rejection and expect to apply several times before getting accepted.

I was wondering if there are any American architecture firms who have a good foothold in China. It could be a joint venture with a Chinese firm or anything, really. I just need the name of an American company that is pretty active over here.

Beyer Blinder Belle (BBB), Perkins+Will, Graft, MulvannyG2 Architecture and Gensler.

BBB has a studio in Beijing mainly working on their Shanghai project. Graft has been around for a long time. Gensler has a pretty big office in Shanghai.

Are there any Chinese banks that offer a debit card of some sort that can be used outside of China?

UnionPay uses overseas cards but they are extremely limited, even in Hong Kong. In Singapore and Malaysia they are only accepted at the airport duty free shops and in the city, they can be used at less than 1 percent of the merchants that accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

I searched online for Beijing commercial real estate but came up with nothing. Does anyone know of a good Web site where I can search for commercial real estate in Beijing?

The following Web sites can help you:

beijingrealestate.com/
linkrealty.com.cn

joannarealestate.com.cn

(By Li Fenghua)



New museum at C

By Han Manman

For almost 2,500 years, the Acropolis of Athens has stood as an embodiment of the highest achievement in western art and architecture. Unfortunately, half of its treasure relics have never been seen by the public due to the small display area of the Acropolis museum inside the Parthenon temple. Now, a long-delayed and disputed new ultra modern museum – the Acropolis Museum, located just below the ancient Athens landmark – will open. It was designed specifically to encourage the British Museum into returning its own prized collection of Parthenon relics. Since Tuesday, an exhibition is being held in the Hellenic House in Beijing to give locals a preview of the new Acropolis museum and its exhibits.



Bronze Corinthian helmet with an inscription. Dedicated by Hiero, the tyrant of Syracuse. 472BC.



Bronze statuette of a warrior. 550 BC.



A major move

Moving some 4,500 ancient masterpieces into the new Acropolis Museum is the biggest antiquities relocation project in Greek history.

"This is the move of the century It is the first time in 2,500 years that the Parthenon marbles have been moved," Pantermalis said.

Around 330 statues and artifacts from the Parthenon and other temples that overlook the capital were transported to the foot of the new museum by cranes from the current museum, which was carved into the rock in 1874 and stands atop the historic hill itself.

"The moving work was very difficult. Many antiquities at the Acropolis have been ravaged by wars, earthquakes and pollution over the millennia. The cranes needed to transfer each piece carefully to its new home and the antiquities could only be transported vertically, not horizontally," he said.

Photos provided by the Greek Embassy



The miniature exhibition

The exhibition displays cast copies of the west frieze of the Parthenon, the most famous monument at the Acropolis. Visitors to the exhibition will also have the opportunity to see a scale model of the Museum's Parthenon Gallery – the gallery in which the original blocks of the frieze and other elements of the architectural decoration of the Parthenon are displayed.

Photos of the completed museum building provide real views of the Parthenon Gallery and other key architectural elements.



State-of-the-art museum

The construction of a new museum to house all the surviving antiquities from the Acropolis has been on the drawing board for over three decades. Archaeology professor, Dimitris Pantermalis, President of the New Acropolis Museum, is the soul of the project. In his eyes, the new museum is the best mix of the ancient and modern.

The new state-of-the-art museum is capped by a glass hall containing the Parthenon works and allows visitors a direct view of the ancient temple, some 300 meters away.

The construction cost 129 million euro. During the exterior decoration of the surrounding buildings, the historic relocation of all the exhibits from the old museum to the new was completed last month. The museum will open to the public in September.

"For the first time since the excavations at the Acropolis Rock 200 years ago, all the major findings will be exhibited together in one museum," Pantermalis said, adding that it will be the most up-to-date archaeological museum in the world. The period of the findings spans prehistoric, archaic and classical periods and the Hellenistic and roman years until later Antiquity (1,000 BC – 700 AD).

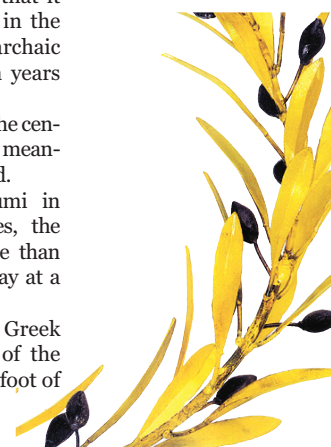
"Its rich and unique collections will reveal to visitors the centuries-long life of the sacred site which condenses the true meaning of the classical culture of antiquity," the professor said.

Designed by US-based architect Bernard Tschumi in collaboration with Greek architect Michael Photiades, the 14,000-square-meter exhibition area will contain more than 4,000 works – 10 times the amount currently on display at a cramped museum at the Acropolis.

All the 2,500-year-old Parthenon sculptures in Greek possession will be displayed on a full-sized model of the temple inside the museum, which is being built at the foot of the Acropolis hill.



Marble portrait head of a wrestler. 340 BC.



Detailed view of the ground floor of the museum in glass



The New Acropolis Museum

mar vels r eece

13
Center stage

Attic red-figure kylix with a depiction of a boxing contest. The losing contestant is raising the index finger of his right hand to make the gesture of submission. 500BC.



Bronze statuette of a horse from a model of a four-horse chariot, dedicated in the Sanctuary by the victor in the chariot race. 470 BC.



Battle of Britain and Greece

Greece hopes that the new museum will eventually host the collection including the part maintained by the British, who waged a lengthy dispute with Greece some 200 years ago when Greece was still an unwilling part of the Ottoman empire.

Time and again the Greek government asked the collection be returned but the request fell on deaf ears with the UK saying that Greece didn't have the ability to preserve the antiquities.

"Finishing the glass and concrete building was a national challenge. Once the museum is completed, Greece will have a very strong argument to present to the Brits for the return of the Parthenon sculptures. We are taking a very important step to finally realize a dream that unites all Greeks," Greek local media said, quoting Greek prime minister Costas Karamanlis.

Pantermalis said blank spaces in the museum's third floor will be left available for the sculptures, currently housed in the British Museum. This is where the so-called Elgin Marbles, sculptures removed from the Parthenon 200 years ago, would have stood.



Marble statue of the emperor Hadrian. The cuirass is adorned with two figures of Victory crowning a Palladion, which is supported on a she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus.



Protecting Greek image

Initially scheduled to be completed before the 2004 Athens Olympics, the museum construction had been delayed due to long-running legal fights and new archaeological discoveries at the site.

The new museum has long been plagued by controversy, including protests from locals who objected to its location, and architects who did not like its modern style, which they claimed would destroy Athens' traditional image. They suggested it be built in the Acropolis style.

Now, with the impending opening of the new museum, the dispute has gradually calmed down.

According to Pantermalis, the old museum at the Acropolis will be used to display items and materials to help visitors gain a better understanding of the site, such as illustrations by 16th and 17th century travelers, showing a time before the Parthenon and the other buildings on the Acropolis had suffered extensive damage from a 1688 siege.



Info

Where: The Hellenic House, No.109, Nanheyuan Dajie, Dongcheng District, Beijing

Open: until March 31

Tel: 6532 4513, 6532 4713

Admission: free



BEIJING TODAY

Editors: Yu Shanshan Li Jing Designer: Yang Gen

The Gravedigger's Daughter

By Charles Zhu

Hardly any contemporary American writer is more prolific than Joyce Carol Oates. During her 45-year creative career, she has produced novels, short stories, essays, plays and poems focusing on racism, anti-Semitism, adultery, alcoholism, brutality and murder. She has written over 700 short stories: more than Maupassant and Chekhov.

The Gravedigger's Daughter (582pp, Ecco, US \$26.95) is the latest entry in her catalog. The novel follows immigrants from Nazi Germany who settle in upstate New York. After a narrow escape, schoolteacher Jacob Schwart comes to the new world with his wife, two sons and a daughter Rebecca, born in New York Harbor.

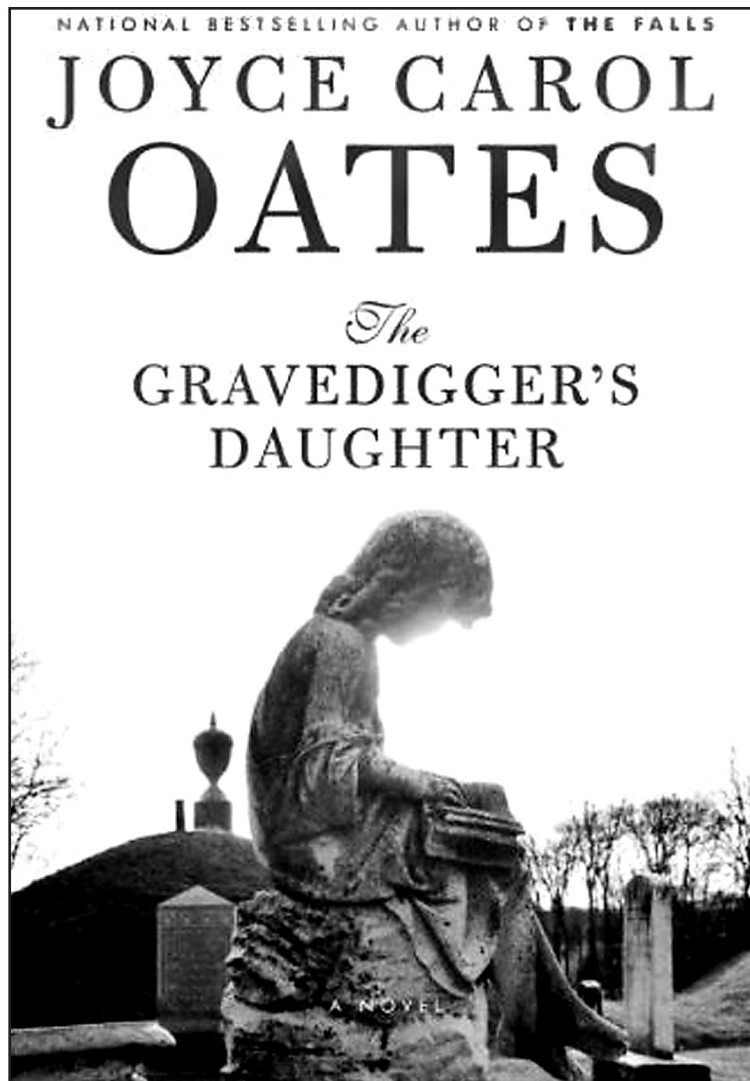
Jacob cannot find a job in Milburn in western New York and is forced to become a gravedigger. It may be because of his proud personality or because of his job, he lives increasingly away from all the townspeople. He becomes "a troll-man, broken-backed and limping, in soiled work clothes and a cloth cap that looked as if they'd been hacked out of a substance harsher than mere cloth."

His grudges find an outlet in family members.

Poverty-pressed Herschel, the elder son, grows into a rough, foul-mouthed boy. One morning before Halloween, the Schwart family finds a swastika painted in tar on their door and half the cemetery destroyed. Herschel, in a savage act of revenge, takes his knife and etches a swastika on the forehead of Jeb, a ruffian.

Perennially tortured by his memories of Germany and the humility of his current life, Jacob goes mad and plunges into a horrific act of violence: He kills his wife and nearly does the same to Rebecca before he commits suicide.

The 17-year-old Rebecca falls in love with beer salesman Niles Tignor, who is aggressive and violent in bursts of anger.

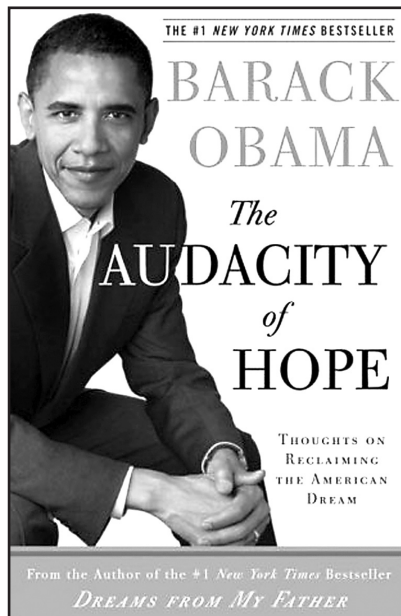


His violent fits cause Rebecca to miscarry. Rebecca, with her son Niley, flees and lives in constant fear of being rediscovered.

In *Gravedigger*, Oates shows her terrific imagination and the finesse of an artist.

She creates a world of horror and

sweetness, fear and happiness, sorrow and hope in which we all live. Oates stands out in a sea of similar artists for her ability to present a story line of brutality and madness, and yet counterpoise it with such sweet things as jazz and Beethoven's *Appassionata* sonata.



It is standard practice for US presidential candidates to publish a biography in the year or two leading up to the big race, but US Senator Barack Obama's 1995 memoir *Dreams From My Father*, continues to draw attention.

Obama, the only son of a white mother from Kansas and a black father from Kenya,

Mixed approach to reclaiming the dream

grew up with an Indonesian stepfather in Jakarta and his grandparents in Hawaii. His youth shot him around the globe and gave him the global and cultural perspectives Washington often lacks. Not to mention making him a poster child for the Democratic Party's chosen image of the century.

His last book, *The Audacity of Hope* (384pp, Three Rivers Press, US \$8.22), is far more political. Its pages are drawn from the prepared platitudes that plague political discourse, Obama generally comes off looking like a human. He tried pot; he tried booze; he tried blow; he is off it now.

Obama's key selling point, aside from his endorsement by Oprah, continues to be his "authenticity." While he may drop some of the prepared platitudes that plague political discourse, Obama generally comes off looking like a human. He tried pot; he tried booze; he tried blow; he is off it now.

Throughout the book, Obama seeks a middle ground in all his policies. He supports the right to abortion without bashing on its opponents. He supports religion but opposes forcing it. He supports pulling

troops out of Iraq but will not say when. He supports free trade but laments how it affects US workers.

"Perhaps I just find the ways of the human heart too various, and my own life too imperfect, to believe myself qualified to serve as anyone's moral arbiter," he writes.

One thing Obama does not fear is to bite the hands that feed him. Campaigns call for donations, and donations come from law firm partners and investment bankers who wear the blinders of the upper class. They do not see or understand "the world of immediate hunger, disappointment, fear, irrationality and frequent hardship of the other 99 percent of the population – that is, the people that I'd entered public life to serve," Obama writes.

Only a few states have selected a democratic candidate, and whether Obama or his competitor Hillary Clinton will be the candidate on this year's ballot remains to be seen.

(By Derrick Sobodash)

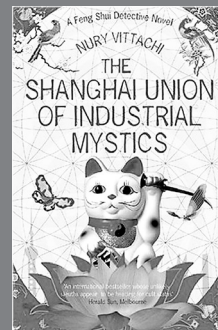
Bookworm book listing

Jenny Niven from the Bookworm recommends three new titles to read during the Beijing Bookworm International Literary Festival, March 6 to 20.

The Shanghai Union of Industrial Mystics

By Nury Vittachi, 336 pp, Polygon, 150 yuan

When a group of vegan terrorists threaten to blow up the world's two most important leaders along with half of Shanghai, the job to save Shanghai, the world and one potentially explosive white elephant falls to curmudgeonly feng shui master C.F. Wong and his over-enthusiastic assistant Joyce. Innovative, mystical, craftily plotted and leavened with a generous dose of humor, this is highly original entertainment by one of Asia's best known authors.



A Thousand Years of Good Prayers

By Yiyun Li, 254 pp, HarperPerennial, 120 yuan

A Thousand Years of Good Prayers shows a modern China facing up to a complex history of repression and guilt. In *Immortality*, winner of the Paris Review prize, a young man bears a striking resemblance to the dictator, and so finds a strange kind of calling. In *Extra*, first published in the New Yorker, a middle-age Chinese woman befriends a young boy who has become an outcast in a remote country school. In their friendship, we see how love can begin to overcome the strictures that dominate their lives.

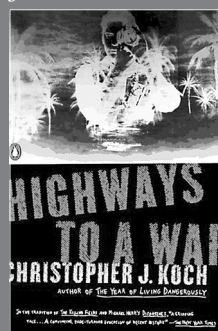


Highways to a War

By Christopher Koch, 496 pp, Penguin Books, 180 yuan

It is 1976 and Australian war photographer Mike Langford has disappeared inside Cambodia. The country was closed to all foreigners since the Khmer Rouge takeover, and Langford's disappearance spawns suspicion of his death or imprisonment. When the narrator, a boyhood friend, receives Langford's diary-on-tape, spanning 1965-1975, it sets off a series of reminiscences that offer indelible insights into the mind and heart of a remarkable individual who would dare infiltrate Kampuchea against all odds.

(By Zhang Dongya)



Gundam

a constructive outlet for destructive urges

Photo by Kyodo

By He Jianwei
China's multitude of anime maniacs has seen *Gundam Seed Destiny*, but only a few collect the Gundam models.
Last year, a new series of the models was released on the mainland market, which combine the Gundam models and heroes from *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. The fancy figures have drawn new collectors into the Gundam universe.

Humanoid designs

Gundam models come in plastic and non-plastic kits and depict the mechs, vehicles and characters from the fictional Mobile Suit Gundam universe. The kits are popular among anime fans and model-lovers, especially in Japan and neighboring Asian countries.

Most Chinese anime fans and model-lovers collect plastic Gundam model kits, which are manufactured by Bandai in Japan or China. The plastic model kits are typically supplied with stickers and sometimes decals to apply extra colors and markings.

Smaller or lower grade kits often require paint to give the model a finished appearance.

Kits bear grade ratings according to finished quality; they are available in high grade, master grade and perfect grade.

Yu Pu, 20, a college student in Capital University of Economics and Business, is a veteran Gundam col-

lector. He purchased his first model at age 15.

"When I passed by a model shop, one of the models caught my eye. It was a humanoid robot," Yu said.

Most collectors start off as fans of the Gundam anime, but Yu took the other route.

The model started his collection, and it was not long before Yu began to remodel the models.

"It is not as simple as a jigsaw puzzle. Remodeling takes time and effort," he said.

After five years and 15,000 yuan, Yu has amassed a collection of more than 50 Gundam models. "[My] cheapest one is around 50 to 60 yuan and the most expensive is over 1,000 yuan," he said.

Yu said the high cost of Gundam models might be the reason why they have a limited number of collectors.

The road to veteran

At first, Yu followed the instructions when assembling the models.

All the parts come attached to a plastic frame. First the parts must be snapped off and the edges burnished with sandpaper.

"Practice makes perfect. When you sand down a whole lot of plastic pieces, you get really quick at it," he said.

The most important thing is to make every plastic joint appear seamless. It is the most difficult part of assembly, Yu said. "If you use too much glue, it will

leave marks on the plastic. If you do not use enough, you can never seal the gap," he said.

After gluing the pieces together, he sands and smooths each piece again.

The last step is painting. At first, Yu left each model in its original colors. Over time, he got adventurous. "I bought a white model, but I wanted to paint it black," he said.

"If you want to be a veteran of Gundam models, you'd better have spray paint, a paint tray, paint thinner and some permanent ink pens," he said.

It can be unique

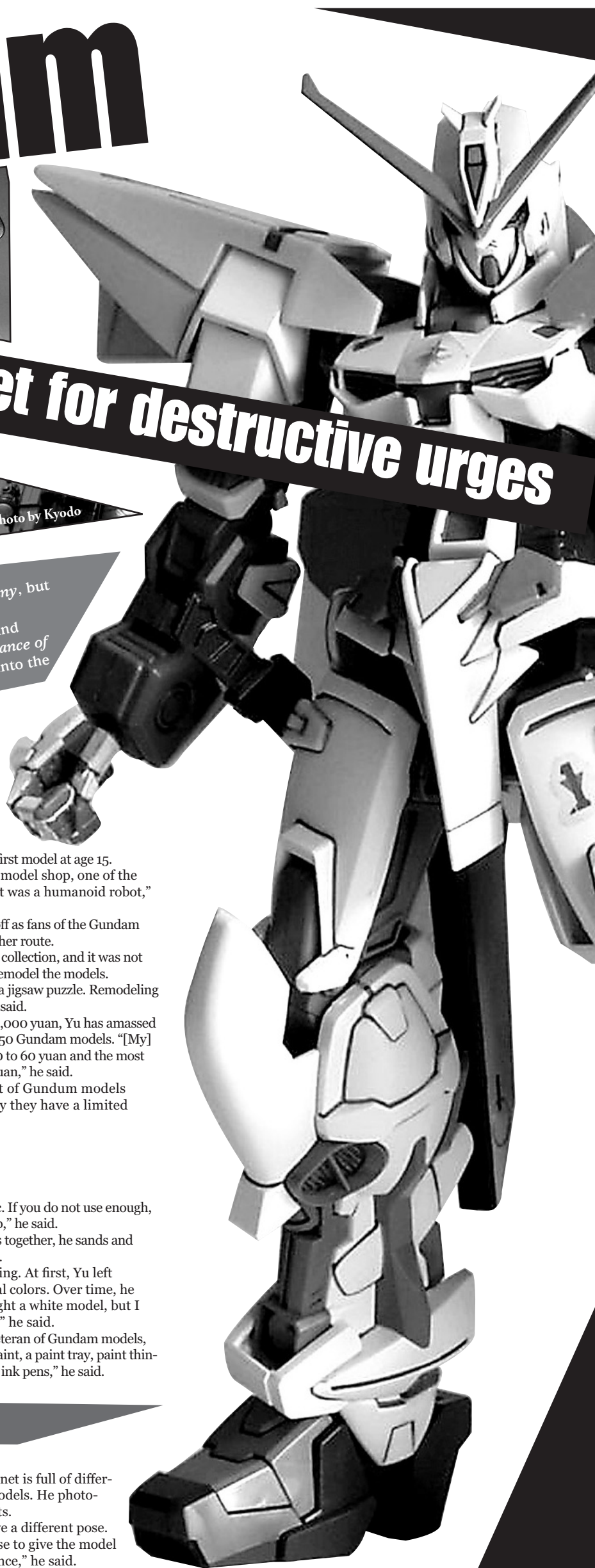
"Every Gundam model can be made unique. This is one of the biggest attractions for collectors," he said.

Yu said everyone in childhood loves to disassemble clocks, radios and TV sets, and then try to reassemble them. Gundam models are a perfect outlet for both one's destructive and constructive

streaks, he said.

At his home, his cabinet is full of different series of Gundam models. He photographs his completed kits.

"Each model can have a different pose. I take photos of each pose to give the model a more life-like appearance," he said.



Matchbox art



By Wang Chuyang

The ability to create and use fire was one of the first steps towards human civilization. When the friction match was invented, it revolutionized the production, application and the portability of fire.

Matches are now in terminal decline, having been rendered technically obsolete by disposable lighters. However, new and unique matchbox designs might catch your eye. They are a miniature miracle!

Though Beijing's Houhai area is known for chic grocery stores and boutiques, you can find some delightful surprises hidden away on the quiet side streets. Welcome to the quaint Opa Gallery. Its exhibition features – matchboxes! PingMag lays its hands on this universally-known household item as it becomes hand-designed by 100 different artists!

This charming matchbox art is currently in its seventh edition, and visitors ranging from children to senior citizens come to look at and touch the minuscule masterpieces. An item that undoubtedly appeals to everybody since it is so common in everyday life. So, how did it all start?

Match Quotes owner Huang Peng said, "The concept of this exhibition was thought up by illustrator Mao who had her own gallery and shop," Huang said. "But the idea became so fascinating that it was decided to take the concept to other galleries as well. Since there was a lot of interest from visitors, we not only opened another exhibition the following year, but decided to start holding it yearly."

At first, Huang thought that people would be interested, but he found people curious about the art was so tiny. Many visitors were young and had never struck a match, and older visitors felt nostalgic when they examined the match works.

"When you open a matchbox, it turns into a three-dimensional sculpture," Huang said. This is probably what makes it so nice to design matchboxes rather than working on two-dimensional canvasses. Also, there is the joy of striking a match and the distinct odor that comes with it. Something you don't get with a lighter.

We bet the artist had a lot of fun with his miniature creations as well as the visitors who were allowed to freely touch, grab and hold the matchstick works of art!

Match Quotes (Huochai Yulu)

Where: 37, Yandai Xiejie, Xicheng District

Hehua Market Street, Xicheng District

Online Shop: shop20872251.taobao.com

Open: 9 am – 8 pm

Price: 20-25 yuan per pack

Photos by Jason Wang

Another place to find match boxes in town

Match Box Paradise
(Huochai Tiantang)

Where: 17, Nan
Luoguxiang, Xicheng
District

Open: 9 am – 8 pm



By Gan Tian

Tastes are intensely intertwined with memory. Maybe rosemary conjures up memories of love, or mint those memories of the eternal. Marjoram is connected with happiness and sage with the saga of youth.

With spring returning, now is the time to familiarize yourself with which herbs you can plant this year.

Learning the spices of life



Mint

Mint is popular throughout Europe, and is also very famous here in China. Mint is an excellent plant to cultivate in and around the home. It repels the more pesky insects and attracts good ones.

Tips: Mint leaves are used in teas, beverages, jellies, syrups, candies and ice creams. In Middle Eastern cuisine, mint is used in lamb dishes. In British cuisine, mint sauce is popular with lamb.



Chervil

Chervil is native to the Caucasus but was spread by the Romans throughout most of Europe.

Tips: chervil is used to season poultry, seafood and young vegetables. It is particularly popular in France, where it is added to omelettes, salads and soups. More delicate than parsley, it has a faint taste of liquorice.

Dill

Dill is easily grown at home, either potted or in a small garden. It is native to the eastern Mediterranean region and western Asia. The word is derived from the old Norse word *dylla*, which means to soothe or to lull.

Tips: dill often goes with seafood. Mix it with garlic, lemon water and olive oil, and roast beef, mutton and fish.



Marjoram

Marjoram originates in the hot climates of North Africa, Turkey and Southwest Asia. Now it is also cultivated in the Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe.

Tips: Fresh marjoram has a lemony and grassy flavor. It goes well with delicate fish, white bean salads, fresh vegetables and tomato sauce. Dried marjoram is also used as a main ingredient in the Jordanian seasoning blend zahtar, and in the German dried sausage herb called wurstkraut, or sweet marjoram.



Basil

Basil is also known as Sweet Basil or Tulsi. It comes from India and other tropical regions of Asia and is a symbol of mourning in Greece. It grows to between 30-60 centimeters tall with 3-5-centimeter-long leaves.

Tips: You can snip basil into small pieces and sprinkle it into salad, pizza or spaghetti. You can also use it with tomatoes, one of its best known combinations. Mix with sage and dill for a thick flavor.



Sage

Sage has a very lovely Chinese name – *Shu-weicao*, which means grass on a mouse's tail. It is native to the Mediterranean. Peggy Trowbridge Filippone suggested in *Your Guide to Home Cooking* that the grass was considered to have substantial healing properties in ancient Rome, and was particularly helpful in digestion of fatty meats. The French once produced bountiful crops of the herb to use as tea, and traded it with China at an exchange of four pounds of tea to one pound of sage.

Tips: Sage is a little bitter. You can use it with olive oil, or make it into sage cream. Fresh leaves go well with fried food.



Lavender

Lavender flowers are widely cultivated in gardens. The purple flowers make lavender a romantic bloom.

Tips: Adding too much lavender to a dish can make it taste like bitter perfume. Its flavor is very strong.



Rosemary

This herb's name is derived from the Latin *rosmarinus*, which means "dew of the sea." The leaves are evergreen, 2-4 centimeters long and 2-5 millimeters across. It is more nutrient rich in its dry form than fresh, and it contains iron, calcium and Vitamin B6.

Tips: Use thin leaves and branches for beefsteaks and mutton chops. Roast with them and its flavor will enter the meat. It also goes well with potatoes.

Where to buy

It is hard to find Western herbs in Beijing's supermarkets, but April Gourmet stocks a "Master Foods" pack, imported from abroad, with nine herbs inside.

Jiezuo branch

Where: F1, Jiezuo Dasha, Xingfu Zhong Jie, Chaoyang District

Sanlitun branch

Where: 1, Sanlitun Bei Xiaojie, Chaoyang District

Shunyi branch

Where: out of the south gate of Mingduyuan, Baixinzhuang, Houshayu, Shunyi District

Photos by Liu Ying

Dining



Jaan

Jaan is cooking up a business lunch for you. Painstakingly created for business executives, Jaan introduces a two/three-course weekly set lunch menu priced at 188 yuan and 228 yuan respectively. The business lunch menu changes every week to provide something different and innovative for guests. The menu is comprised of an appetizer, a main course and a dessert. Guests are allowed to choose one from selections of two in each category.

Where: Jaan, Raffle Beijing Hotel, 33 Dong Changanjie, Dongcheng

When: From March 3

Cost: 188 yuan (two course), 228 yuan (three course)

Tel: 6526 3388 ext 4186 (for reservations)

Spring heralds new life

Bamboo shoots represent longevity, strength and the much-anticipated arrival of the spring season. Specialty dishes of bamboo

shoots are prepared with braised dried seafood and shitake mushrooms, simply sautéed with dried chilli and macadamia nuts or fried and served with Ahi tuna sashimi.

Where: Jewel, the Westin Beijing, 9B Jinrong Jie, Xicheng

When: 11:30 am – 10:30 pm

Cost: All prices subject to 15% service charge

Tel: 6629 7820



If you have any info for this page, please send it to lixiaojing@ynet.com

Nightlife



Joystick Party

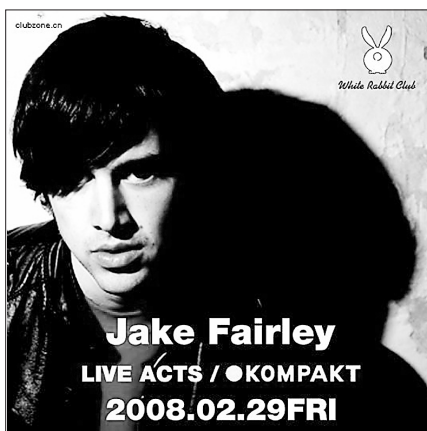
The party features deejays – Abel from Germany, David from France and Leslie from China – and singer James Smith from New York.

Where: Star Live, F/3, Tangguo Building, Yonghegongqiao Bei, Chaoyang

When: 9 pm

Admission: 80 yuan (advance), 100 yuan (door)

Tel: 6425 5677



Jake Fairley

Over the past few years Jake Fairley has become recognized as a key force in the growing Canadian electronic music scene.

Where: White Rabbit Club, C2, 29 Zaoying Lu, Maizidian, Chaoyang

When: 11 pm – 3 am next day, February 29

Admission: 80 yuan

Tel: 13521263552

Outdoors

Three Falls Valley Loop Hike

On this hike you will enjoy excellent views of the Great Wall and surrounding mountains, and pass by a waterfall and a cave that the local villagers used as a hiding place during their battles with the Japanese army.

The pool at the foot of the main waterfall was once clear and big enough to swim in, but recently the water has dried up. The pool is surrounded by flat rocks that make a naturally nice place to have a rest and enjoy the sun. The pool and waterfall ice up during winter.

The walk begins with walking up the valley from the village. After a break at the waterfall and pool you make your way up to a ridge – in one place you might need to use a rope to help climb the steep incline. As you follow the ridge back to the village you can see all the Great Wall towers that make up the Fifteen Towers hike on one side; in the other direction you will see the route of the Four Towers hike. On clear days postcard-quality photos can be taken of the Great Wall and mountains.

Where: Meet on the ground floor of Starbucks (Jiangtai Lu, Lido Holiday Inn)

When: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, March 1

Cost: 300 yuan

Tel: 13910025516 (reservations are essential)



Shaolin Temple & Luoyang Longmen Grottoes

Luoyang lies in the “center of the loess” near the southern area of the Yellow River in Henan province. For several centuries, Luoyang was the center of China, a major cradle of Chinese civilization

Luoyang has the Longmen Grottoes, one of the four most famous Buddhist grottoes in China with over 100,000 Buddha figures in more than 2,300 niches carved on the hill and Songshan Mountain's famous Shaolin Temple – the cradle of Shaolin Kung Fu and the number one Buddhist temple in China.

When: Take the overnight train to Luoyang on February 29 and fly back on March 2

Cost: 2,850 yuan

Tel: 6432 9341, 6432 1041 (registration at the Chinese Culture Club is important) (By Li Jing)



Hidden killer inside

By Han Manman

Last Tuesday morning in a hospital in Hong Kong, Lydia Shum, known as "Fei-fei" or "Fatty" and one of Hong Kong's most popular comedienne, died of pancreatic cancer, the same disease that took Italian opera superstar Luciano Pavarotti's life awhile ago.

Their deaths raised people's awareness about pancreatic cancer, a fatal disease that spreads rapidly and is seldom detected in its early stages, which is a major reason why it is a leading cause of death from cancer. Signs and symptoms may not appear until the disease is quite advanced. By that time, the cancer is likely to have spread to other parts of the body and surgical removal is no longer possible.

Risk factors

The vast majority of pancreatic cancers occur in people older than 65. Other important risk factors include:

Race: Black men and women have a higher risk of pancreatic cancer.

Sex: More men than women develop this type of cancer.

Cigarette smoking: If you smoke, you're two to three times more likely to develop pancreatic cancer than non-smokers.

Abnormal glucose metabolism: Having diabetes may increase your risk of pancreatic cancer. Insulin resistance or high insulin levels may also be risk factors.

Hereditary pancreatitis: Your chances of developing pancreatic cancer increase if you have hereditary chronic pancreatitis.

Excess weight: People who are very overweight or obese may have a greater risk of developing pancreatic cancer than people of normal weight.

Diet: A diet high in animal fat and low in fruits and vegetables may increase your risk.

Disease in disguise

Pancreatic cancer is one of the most serious of all cancers and often inoperable due to its late detection, high mortality rate and poor treatment. It develops when cancerous cells form in the tissues of the pancrea – a large organ that lies horizontally behind the lower part of your stomach. Your pancreas secretes enzymes that aid digestion and hormones that help regulate the metabolism of carbohydrates.

Warning signs

See your doctor if you experience the following conditions. Many problems other than cancer may show similar signs and symptoms, so your doctor will check for these conditions as well as for pancreatic cancer.

1. Upper abdominal pain that may radiate to your middle or upper back. Pain is a common symptom of advanced pancreatic cancer. Abdominal pain occurs when a tumor presses on surrounding organs and nerves. Pain may be constant or intermittent and is often worse after you eat or when you lie down.

2. Loss of appetite and unintentional weight loss. Weight loss occurs in most types of cancer situations because cancerous (malignant) cells deprive healthy cells of nutrients, and this is especially true in pancreatic cancer.

3. Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice). About half of the people with pancreatic cancer develop jaundice. In addition, your urine may be dark brown and your stools white or gray-colored.

4. Itching In the later stages of pancreatic cancer, you may develop severe itching when high levels of bile acids, another component of bile, accumulate in your skin.

5. Nausea and vomiting. In advanced cases of pancreatic cancer, the tumor may block a portion of your digestive tract, usually the upper portion of your small intestine (duodenum), causing nausea and vomiting.

Alter your life

For years, little was known about pancreatic cancer. But researchers are beginning to understand the genetic basis of the disease – knowledge that may eventually lead to new and better treatments. Just as important, you may be able to reduce your risk of pancreatic cancer with some lifestyle changes.

1. Stop smoking. Cigarette smoke contains carcinogens that can damage the DNA that regulates cell growth. Talk to your doctor about ways to quit, or contact the American Cancer Society or American Lung Association for more information.

2. Exercise regularly. Experts believe that getting even a moderate amount of exercise every week can cut your risk of pancreatic cancer.

3. Eat a healthy diet. A diet high in fruits and vegetables and low in animal fat can reduce your risk of pancreatic cancer.

4. Maintain a healthy weight. Lydia Shum and Luciano Pavarotti's deaths were more or less caused by obesity, which can also cause other fatal illnesses such as heart attacks and diabetes.

If you need to lose weight, keep in mind that a slow, steady loss is the healthiest way to reach your goal. Aim for no more than one to two pounds a week. Add 30 minutes or more of aerobic exercise – such as walking, jogging or biking – on most days, and you can increase the amount of weight you lose.



Photo by Liu Ying

An etude to the island coast

Although Chinese films did not make the final list of this year's Academy Awards nominees, one Taiwan film has been a hit with major audiences. *Island Etude*, directed by Chen Huai-en, and featuring a young man's cycling trip around Taiwan, went up for an Oscar Award in place of Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution*.

"If there is something you want to do, do it now or you will never get the chance," Dong Ming-siang, 29, said at the start of the film.

Chen divided the script into 12 parts, which showed the cyclist circling Taiwan from Kaohsiung up the island's east coast, through Taipei in the north, and back down the west coast. In the movie, the trip took seven days: in reality, filming took place over six months when weather and scheduling allowed.

Through Dong's experiences, the director discussed contemporary socio-political issues and filled the screen with island beauty.



Illustrated by Wenna

From Kaohsiung to Taitung's Taimalin, 141 kilometers

Day 1 ←



Taimali, the town of the rising sun and day lily

Dong's first destination was Taimali, a small town in Taitung. Dong learned a lesson in persistence from "Uncle Wang," an old man who has spent his life making wood sculptures.

During the Japanese occupation, invading soldiers planted medicinal herbs in the Jihbhen and Taimali mountain areas of Taitung to develop "Medicine Mountain." Statistics show 2,000 varieties of medicinal herbs can be found in the Taitung area, making it the "Homeland of Taiwan Medicinal Herbs."

Taimali is situated on the coastline of southeastern Taitung and is renowned for the "town of the ring sun." Its Jinzhenshan, or Day Lily Mountain, is one of Taiwan's three best locations for viewing the "sea of day lilies." The harvest season is August through late October. The best time to enjoy the brilliant colors of the massive lily blossom is, of course, when the picking starts.

→ Day 2

The Tropic of Cancer Marker in Hualien

At Rueisuei in Hualien County, Dong encountered a young cyclist driving to meet his mother at Hualien. When Dong stopped to rest by the Tropic of Cancer Marker, he spent the night in the house of the cyclist's mother. Dong was touched by the sadness of the single mother.

The Tropic of Cancer, the circle marking the latitude at about 24 degrees north, is the Northern Hemisphere's furthest location from the Equator that can experience the sun being directly overhead. Every June 22, the sun is directly over the Tropic of Cancer.

The Tropic of Cancer crosses through Shueishang, Chaiyi County, Rueisuei, Hualien County, and Fongbin.

Rueisuei's Tropic of Cancer Marker was placed in 1933. At that time, it was placed west of Rueisuei Railway Station. In 1981, due to widening work done by the Eastern Line Railway, the marker was moved to the Wuhe Terrace, and placed on Provincial Road No 9.



Continued on page 21 ...

... continued from page 20

Day 3

From Hualien to
Yilan's Beiguan,
144 kilometers



Hanben Station and Atayal tribe

At Hanben Station, between Hualien and Yilan, Dong met Sonja, a young Lithuanian woman traveling Taiwan. In a touching, almost romantic scene, she explains that she came to his homeland because Lithuania has no mountains; its highest point is 282 meters above sea level whereas Taiwan has Jade Mountain, East Asia's highest mountain, at 3,952 meters. Dong reached Wuta Village, the origin of the Atayal tribe.

The name Hanben came from the Japanese "Hanbun," which means a half, because Hanben station is

between Hualien and Yilan.

The Atayal tribe is one of Taiwan's nine aboriginal tribes. The first record of Atayal inhabitation is found near the upper reaches of the Chosui River. Some time during the late 17th century they crossed the Central Mountain Ranges into the wilderness of the east, and then settled in the Liwu River valley. Seventy-nine Atayal villages can be found here.

They practiced many forms of food production including slash and burn agriculture, hunting, fishing and gathering.



Day 4

Keelung's Ho Ping Island

At Badouzh outside Keelung, Dong stopped for noodles in a street-side restaurant where local people animatedly argued whether plans to build the National Museum of Marine Science and Technology would be a good thing or turn the local harbor into a Disneyland.

From Yilan to Ruiping, Taipei County, 143 kilometers

Keelung's bay cuts deep into its downtown. There are many more slopes

than plains within the city, and moreover, the protective Keelung Island and Ho Ping Island screen on both sides of the water.

Ho Ping Island was called Liao Island in the past. In 1626, the Spanish army built castles, churches and fortresses in preparation to do business with China and Japan. The castle on the southwest is called San Salvador. During the Spanish occupation, Ho Ping Island had busy trading activities with Southeast Asia. After World War II, the island was renamed Ho Ping Island. Today, it is famous for diving and sea fishing.

Day 5

From Ruiping to Changhua, 171 kilometers

Matsu's temple in Miaoli

In Bali, Taipei County, he encountered a group of middle-aged women protesting against their former factory boss who had closed his Taiwan business and relocated to the Chinese mainland without paying back the money invested in their pensions. Dong saw a statue of the fishermen's deity Matsu as it makes an annual pilgrimage through the western seaboard counties.

Matsu, goddess of the sea,

protector of seafarers, and Taiwan's preeminent folk deity, will be going on tour at the end of the third Chinese lunar month, as she does every year.

Peishatun Matsu, who resides at the Gungtien Temple in Tungshiao, Miaoli County, has the longest pilgrimage route.

According to one version of the legend, Matsu saved her father, brother and a number of fishermen from drowning while she physically remained at home.



From Yunlin to Kaohsiung, 144 kilometers

Day 7

San Tiao Lwun Beach in Yunlin

Dong experiences compassion as another young man cycling around Taiwan helps Dong change his flat tire along the road in San Tiao Lwun, Yunlin.

San Tiao Lwun Bathe Piazza is the only bath piazza in the middle part of Taiwan. It is in Szechu, Nan Lun Village. The water quality of the piazza is clear, and the beach is straight. Years of erosion formed the seaway sandbank in the outer sea and the inner part is the unique hill.

The inland is warm in winter and cool in summer - the best season for camping and barbecuing. The oyster nearby shows its frame out of the sea when it's ebb time. It forms a special view in the shallow bay.



Day 6

From Changhua to Yunlin, 69 kilometers

Dadu River in Changhua

Heading south, Dong is seen crying at the sight of his own grandfather kneeling down before a statue of Matsu.

The Dadu River is the sixth largest river in Taiwan and a major source of fresh water for the island's west coast ecosystem. It feeds the Dadu Wetlands, which were previously listed by the World Conservation Union as being one of Asia's four major wetlands.

The mouth of the Dadu River is the largest

resting site for water fowl in central Taiwan. Of the birds to be seen there, 24 are listed as protected species. The area has been named by the International Nature Resource Conservation Federation as one of Asia's most important wetlands.

The best bird watching season at Dadu River is October through May. December through April is the best time to see waders and other water birds.



(By He Jianwei)

The Golden Age (2007)



Synopsis

Elizabeth: The Golden Age tells the thrilling tale of an era – the story of one woman's crusade to control love, crush enemies and secure her position as a beloved icon of the western world. As Elizabeth's cousin, Mary Stuart conspires with Philip of Spain to topple the throne, Sir Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's trusty advisor, works tirelessly to protect her from the many plots and conspiracies against her. Preparing to go to war to defend her empire, Elizabeth struggles to balance royal duties with an unexpected vulnerability in her attraction to Raleigh.

Movie of the Week

The Golden Age is a follow-up of 1998's *Elizabeth*. Director *Shekhar Kapur* and the leading role of Queen Elizabeth I played by Cate Blanchett remain the same. This is the fifth Academy Award nomination for Cate Blanchett, including her Oscar nomination for Actress in a Leading Role. This movie won for costume design, at the 80th annual Academy Awards.

Scene 1: Privy Chamber – Whitehall palace

Howard: Why do you go among the people, majesty? I tell you plainly you will be murdered! Every Catholic in England is a potential assassin⁽¹⁾!

Hatton: Bewarned by the atrocities⁽²⁾ in France!

Howard: We know the Catholic take their orders from Spain. The Spanish speak openly of Mary Stuart as Queen of England in waiting. Their loyalty is to the Pope of Rome.

Elizabeth: How many Catholics are there in England, sir?

Elizabeth: Immense⁽³⁾ numbers, majesty!

Hatton: Half the nation clings to the old superstitions.

Elizabeth: What would you have me do? Hang, cut out⁽⁴⁾ half the people of England, or just imprison them?

Howard: We must act, majesty. Our inaction is perceived as weakness.

Howard: If my people break the law, they shall be punished. Until that day, they shall be protected.

Hatton: Majesty, we have to proven reason to fear every Catholic in the land—

Elizabeth: Fear creates

fear, sir. I am not ignorant of the dangerous, Sir. But I will not punish my people for their beliefs. Only for their deeds. I am assured that the people of England love their Queen. My constant endeavor is to earn that love.

Scene 2: Queen's private quarters

Elizabeth: Is it true, Bess? That I've never known the simple pleasure of being liked for myself?

Bess: I hope you believe that I like you for yourself, my lady.

Elizabeth: Is anybody ever liked just for themselves? I doubt it. Are you? Men like you because you're pretty. And because you have the ear of the Queen⁽⁴⁾.

Bess: No doubt, my lady.

Elizabeth: Him, too. He likes you because he wants my favor. You do realize that?

(Here "him" means Mr. Raleigh, who is a pirate who often attacks the Spanish.)

Bess: Yes, my lady.

Elizabeth: And the other thing, too, of course. But all men want that. Male desire confers⁽⁵⁾ no distinction. Oh, I envy you, Bess. You're free to have — what I cannot have. You're my adventurer.



Scene 3: Queen's private quarters

Elizabeth: Are you here to tell me I must murder a queen?

Raleigh: I would never presume to tell my queen what to do. Only you know where your duty lies.

Elizabeth: Was it my father's duty to murder my mother? She was a queen for a time. I would be loath to die so bloody a death.

Raleigh: Since when were you so afraid?

(Now she looks at him.)

Elizabeth: I am always afraid.

Raleigh: (He looks back at her in silence for a long moment. Then —) Kill a Queen — and queens are mortal⁽⁶⁾. We mortals have many weaknesses. We feel too much. Hurt too much. And all too soon, we die. But we do have the chance of love.

Elizabeth: Do we? Do we really? (He nods, her eyes still closed). I have given England my life. Must she also have my soul?

Walsingham: Mary Stuart must die!

Elizabeth: (Elizabeth raging at Walsingham.)

Must? Mary Stuart must die? Where is it written? Who says so? Have I order it?

Walsingham: Majesty, this is no time for mercy —

Elizabeth: Don't preach at⁽⁷⁾ me, old man! Look at you! You can hardly stand. Go home to your wife and your bed.

Scene 4: Dee's House

(Dr. Dee, who is a magician, watches as Elizabeth prowls his cluttered rooms, releasing the tension that has swelled⁽⁸⁾ to bursting point within her.)

Elizabeth: The fall of an empire, you told me. Did you mean the English empire? Because by God, England will not fall while I am Queen! If that's your prophecy⁽⁹⁾, sir, prophesy again!

Dee: You want me to tell your majesty only what your majesty chooses to hear?

Elizabeth: I will not be a toy of the fates! Have I not faced an assassin's bullet and lived?

Elizabeth: Just tell me there's no certainty. Any outcome is possible. The shadows of ghosts, you said. Just, give me hope.

Dee: The forces that shape the world are greater than all of us, majesty. How can I promise you that they'll conspire⁽¹⁰⁾ in your favor, even though you are the Queen? But this much I know. When the storm breaks, each man acts in accordance with his own nature. Some are dumb with terror. Some flee. Some hide. And some spread their wings like eagles and soar on the wind.

Vocabulary

- Assassin:** a person who murders someone important
- Atrocity:** great evil; something that is very unpleasant or ugly
- Immense:** extremely large in size or degree
- You have the ear of the Queen:** you are the Queen's trusty servant
- Confer:** to talk together; compare opinions
- Mortal:** that which will die; not living forever

- Preach at:** to offer unwanted advice on matters of right and wrong
- Swell:** to gradually increase in fullness and roundness to beyond the usual or original size
- Prophecy:** a statement telling something that will happen in the future
- Conspire:** to plan (usually something bad) together secretly

(By Wan Ran)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Gan Tian at gantian@ynet.com.



By Huang Daohen

The "pulling my leg" expression came up at a family reunion reception during this Spring Festival when my little brother-in-law Jerry declared his independence. "I have decided to live on my own in order not to pull your leg, father," he said.

Jerry made his proclamation because he had chosen to live in residence on his college campus as the school site was a bit far from home, and he swore that he would earn a living through part-time work.

Obviously, my little brother had mistakenly quoted the phrase when he translated it word-for-word from the Chinese, which means, "to make the family ashamed". I knew what he really meant was that he would not hold his father back.

However, Jerry's "independence proclamation" caused much trouble for his fellow American classmate Felix. "Doesn't

pulling one's leg mean to play jokes on somebody in English," he asked, "it's not that funny."

The young American nearly choked after I explained to him the true meaning. When you pull a person's leg you are spoofing or making fun of him, usually in a good-humored way, Felix said.

But that wasn't always the meaning of the expression.

According to the Morris Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins by William and Mary Morris, when the expression first turned up in Scotland about a hundred years ago, it was lacking the light-hearted touch it has today. In those days, to "pull one's leg" meant to make a fool of someone, often by outright cheating.

The best theory behind the phrase's origin is that by tripping a person – pulling his leg – you can throw him into a state of confusion and make him look very foolish indeed.

Therefore, if someone says, "don't pull my leg" next time, they really want you to stop playing a joke on them, stop telling lies and tell them the truth.

Photo by Liu Ying

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.

有事请拨
Have Things To Please Dial
81022 / 81055

A case of do or dial

By Derrick Sobodash

When the ancient Egyptians drew pictures of birds and sarcophagi, each picture represented a complete thought.

It could be argued that some Chinese characters are pictographic. Even without the aid of alcohol, you can see that *mu*, the character for eye, might just be an eye rotated 90 degrees. The characters represent deeper ideas than simply shapes, hence the term ideograph.

Slap two ideas together and you get a word. Case in point: birdcage.

Why the endless stream of disastrous translations done by translators who insist on interpreting each character individually? It is as if the only tool on hand was a *Xinhua Zidian* sans definitions.

The sign reads, "Have Things to Please Dial?"

Great. What does that mean? My things are supposed to use a phone? I am supposed to use a phone if I want to have things? Is this some kind of Amway scam?

The writer also committed one deadly grammar sin: the splitting of an infinitive. "To dial" is the infinitive form of the verb. It is one unit, and sticking words in the middle of it is *ri-expletive-deleted-diculous*.

In Chinese, *you shi*, the first two characters, operate as one unit. If you *you shi*, it means you have some business to talk about, or you have a problem to discuss. Conversely, if you *mei shi*, then nothing is wrong. "Please dial" is accurate enough, but it would be most common to say "Please call" or "Please phone."

Rearrange this text to bump the action to the front and the conditions to the end. It should be something like, "Please call if you have any problem."

Depending on where this sign is used, a more specific translation of *you shi* would be preferred. A common customer service desk may have a sign which says, "For complaints and inquiries, please call 81022 / 81055."

Blacklist

Beijing Today has come up with Blacklist, a new column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch it for each week.

Native Speaker: Joe Edwards

1. Prices range from hundreds to thousands depend on locations.

Verb-wise, in the above sentence, you have double trouble, grammatically speaking. You can't have these two verbs, "range" and "depend" cohabitating in this sentence. To make their marriage work, let's do a little grammatical surgery on one. Add an "ing" to

"depend" and both can remain in harmony. The sentence now reads, "Prices range from hundreds to thousands depending on locations."

2. The Olympic Games kick off.

English words can be deceptive, little beasties. You get the impression that the term, "Olympic Games" is in a plural state but, not so, my gullible, little grammar grub! It must be treated as

one grand event and in the singular so, in the example sentence, we must adjust the verb to the singular form to read, "The Olympic Games kicks off."

3. ATM withdrawal has risen to at least 20,000 yuan.

The withdrawal amount is the least of our worries here! The writer is at odds with his "at most" and "at least" comprehension. Since 20,000 yuan is the most or the

maximum amount we can take out, "at most" should be used instead of "at least." If it was the minimum amount we could withdraw, then, using "at least" would be proper grammar. The sentence must read, "ATM withdrawal has risen to at most 20,000 yuan." Don't mix up your maxis and minis! I really can't identify because I will never have 20,000 yuan in my personal bank account.

Local professor: Zhu Shida

1. Prices range from hundreds to thousands depend on locations.

In this sentence, there are two verbs, "range" and "depend." So, it is wrong. Change "depend" into a present participle form and con-

vert it to an adverbial of attending circumstances to read, "Prices range from hundreds of yuan to thousands of yuan, depending on the locations."

2. The Olympic Games kick off.

The Olympic Games, though

seemingly taking a plural form, always remains in the singular. So, you will have to say, "The Olympic Games kicks off."

3. ATM withdrawal has risen to at least 20,000 yuan.

The writer here is confused

with terms, "at least" and "at most." In this case, 20,000 yuan is the maximum, so you should say "at most." If it means the minimum, then you will use "at least." So, it should be: "ATM withdrawal has risen to, at most, 20,000 yuan."

5 Friday, February 29

Exhibition Outward Expressions, Inward Reflections

Outward Expressions, Inward Reflections is an annual showcase of contemporary photography of China's new strengths. The exhibition takes as its point of departure an independent understanding of contemporary photography, selecting artists from the waves of emerging trends with individual spirits and artistic potential to introduce via exhibition and publishing to audiences as contemporary photography's newest achievements in China.

Where: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, 155 Caochangdi, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10 am - 6 pm, until April 13

Admission: Free

Tel: 6432 2663 ext 8008

Dog portraits

Where: 89 Promenade Des Arts Gallery, Room 1010, Building D, North Tower, Nanbao International Mansion, A 3 Xi Dawang Lu, Chaoyang

When: Daily 3 pm - 9 pm, until March 30

Admission: Free
Tel: 8599 9974
Look at this family - Wang Yanyu solo exhibition



The peasant family Wang Yanyu portrayed - father, mother, and child, are presented as honest and unsophisticated. The images visualize their easygoing and simple characters, showing a vivid poetical pastoral life, making people feel joyful, and thus sharing their happiness with this family.

Where: 3818 Cool Gallery, 3818 Warehouse, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10:30 am - 6:30 pm, until March 6



6 Saturday, March 1

Exhibition Time of life - Contemporary fine arts of Europe 2008

The exhibition features Ossi Robertson, Christine Jacob-Marks, and Dieter Finke.

Where: Sound First Gallery, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10 am - 6 pm, until March 28

Admission: Free

Tel: 64312501

To feel the miracle of oceans



Where: Fafa Gallery, 4 Yuyang Lu, Houshayu, Shunyi

When: Daily 10:30 am - 8 pm, until February 29

Admission: Free

Tel: 8430 2587

Building Code Violations II



Where: Long March Space, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10 am - 6 pm, until April 4

Admission: Free

Tel: 64387107

Eye on China - Joint exhibition of Gilles Perrin and Pascal Bollinger

Gilles Perrin and Pascal Bollinger, two French photographers, have explored the subject of China in their work.

Where: Yan Club Arts Center, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Daily 11 am - 6 pm, until April 2

Admission: Free

Tel: 8457 3506

Upcoming

Concert

Pipe Organ Music Week - Concert of classic and modern organ masterpieces

Who: Lio Clayman and Vene Matthew

Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 4

Admission: 60-280 yuan

Admission: Free

Tel: 8688 2525, 8456 6664

Movie

Les Seurs Fachées

Louise, a beautician, is a charming woman, disconcerting, natural and a tad awkward. Martine, her sister is beautiful and aloof and lives in the Parisian upper middle class. Louise has written a novel, and on Monday, she will go for an important appointment in Paris, which could change the course of her life.

Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang

When: 5 pm

Admission: 10-20 yuan

Tel: 6553 2627

7 Sunday, March 2

Exhibition

Lucky Rat welcomes the Year of the Rat - Group Exhibition of Yu Ping & Ren Ping



The theme of Mr and Mrs Yu's works is often based on popular Chinese folklore and their stencil printing artworks are visual presentations of Chinese traditional culture and practices.

Where: Beijing Wan Fung Art Gallery, the Imperial Archives, 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng

When: Mon-Fri 9 am - 5 pm, Sat-Sun 10 am - 5 pm, until March 10

Admission: Free

Tel: 6523 3320

Different Perspectives - Group Exhibition

The exhibition features Han Qing, Chen Yufei, Lu Peng, Wang Yuping, Wang Lifeng and Zhou Jirong

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwen

When: Daily 10 am - 5 pm, until April 5

Admission: Free

Tel: 6525 1005

Mirage - Mao Tongqiang solo exhibition

Where: China Art Seasons, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Tue-Sun 10:30 am - 6:30 pm, until March 23

Admission: Free

Tel: 6431 1900

Group exhibition

The exhibition features You Min, Han Jianyu, Lin Weixiang, Miao Weiwei, Chen Leilei, Su Bilian, Liu Bin, Cui Ying and Lu Qiongwen

Where: 3+3 Space, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Daily 10 am - 6 pm, until April 9

Admission: Free

Tel: 6437 9942

Stage in March

Concert

Incubus Beijing Concert 2008

Who: Incubus

Where: Star Live, F/3, Tangguo, 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng

When: 8 pm, March 12

Admission: 400-600 yuan

Rene Liu (Liu Ruoying) Beijing Live 2008 Concert

Who: Rene Liu (Liu Ruoying)

Where: Capital Gymnasium, 54 Zhongguancun Nan Dajie, Haidian

When: 7:30 pm, March 8

Admission: 280-1,680 yuan

Wang Jian Solo Concert

Who: Wang Jian

Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 23

Admission: 180-1,080 yuan

Pipe Organ Music Week - Organ Music Concert of Bach Classics

Who: Beijing Symphony Orchestra

Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 3

Admission: 50-300 yuan

Pipe Organ Music Week - Concert of Classic and Modern Organ Masterpieces

Who: Lio Clayman and Vene Matthew

Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 4

Admission: 60-280 yuan

China Philharmonic Orchestra 2008

Musical Festival

Who: Conducted by Yi Zhang

Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng

When: 7:30 pm, March 8

Admission: 30-480 yuan

Drama

Amber

Who: National Theatre Company of China

Where: National Grand Theater Drama Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 21-30

Admission: 180-600 yuan

Servant of

Two Masters

Who: Piccolo Theater of Milan

Where: National Grand Theater Drama Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 7-9

Admission: 80-480 yuan

Dance

In the Mood for Love

Who: Shanghai Ballet Group

Where: National Grand Theater Drama Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People

When: 7:30 pm, March 7-9

Admission: 60-380 yuan

(By Li Jing)